

# THE PSYCHIC RESEARCH QUARTERLY

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## EDITORIAL

### PSYCHICAL RESEARCH AT THE LAMBETH CONFERENCE AND THE BRITISH ASSOCIATION

**I**N connection with the recent Lambeth Conference a special Committee of Bishops was appointed "to consider and report upon the Christian Faith in relation to (a) Spiritualism, (b) Christian Science ; and (c) Theosophy."

In the course of their Report the Bishops express themselves as follows :

"We say without hesitation that we welcome scientific investigation : we recognise the patience and the skill with which members of the Psychical Research Society examine the mass of evidence of all kinds submitted to them, and above all the unmistakable desire to safeguard the inquiry against illusion or fraud, to arrive at truths, and to interpret scientific facts correctly."

This passage is followed by a brief but excellent summary of the present position of research and the Report then continues :

"The outcome of these conclusions from the scientific side would seem to be :

"(1) To give a serious warning against unregulated and undue exercise of an element of human consciousness which acts independently of the reason and the will, and against allowing reason and will to abdicate in its favour.

"(2) To insist upon an outlook upon life which refuses to accept materialism as a sufficient account of phenomena, and to encourage belief in a spiritual explanation.

"We welcome inquiry conducted in this reverent and scrupulous spirit."

The Report concludes with the following words :

"It is possible that we may be on the threshold of a new Science,

which will by another method of approach confirm us in the assurance of a world behind and beyond the world we see, and of something within us by which we are in contact with it. We could never presume to set a limit to means which God may use to bring man to the realisation of spiritual life. But there is nothing in the cult erected on this Science which enhances, there is, indeed, much which obscures, the meaning of that other world and our relation to it as unfolded in the Gospel of Christ and the teaching of the Church, and which depreciates the means given to us of attaining and abiding in fellowship with that world."

On the basis of this report the following Resolutions were adopted by the Conference :

"56. We recognise that new phenomena of consciousness have been presented to us, which claim, and at the hands of competent psychologists have received, careful investigation, and, as far as possible, the application of scientific method. But such scientific researches have confessedly not reached an advanced stage, and we are supported by the best psychologists in warning our people against accepting as final theories which further knowledge may disprove, and still more against the indiscriminate and undisciplined exercise of psychic powers, and the habit of recourse to *séances*, 'seers,' and mediums."

"57. The Conference, while prepared to expect and welcome new light from Psychical Research upon the powers and processes of the spirit of man, urges strongly that a larger place should be given in the teaching of the Church to the explanation of the true grounds of Christian belief in eternal life, and in immortality, and of the true content of belief in the Communion of Saints as involving real fellowship with the departed through the love of God in Christ Jesus."

A third Resolution deprecates "the tendency to make a religion of Spiritualism" on the ground, *inter alia*, that "the practice of Spiritualism as a cult involves the subordination of the intelligence and the will to unknown forces or personalities and, to that extent, an abdication of the self-control to which God has called us."

The fact that the Lambeth Conference should have seriously considered these questions would in itself be a source of satisfaction to all who believe in their importance, and for their pronouncements, of which we have quoted the more important, we have nothing but unqualified approval. There are, inevitably, certain minor points on which we find ourselves not wholly in agreement with the Committee ; but where so much is admirable it would be ungenerous to insist on trifling discrepancies of opinion.

The Report and the Resolutions are alike conspicuous for their broad-minded and receptive spirit ; they show a thorough appreciation of the scientific position, of the extent to which Psychical

Research might be expected to reinforce Religion and of the point at which the two subjects become mutually independent.

Spiritualism is, for once, both condemned and—in some measure—approved on the right grounds. No attempt is made to ascribe every phenomenon to a fraudulent origin, and no more than a moderately-worded, and amply-justified, warning is given of possible danger from discarnate and maleficent personalities.

It is greatly to be hoped that the clergy in general will carefully study the Report, and that its moderate and sensible conclusions will play a large part in determining their future attitude towards these questions.

Another event of considerable significance for Psychical Research took place on August 25th, when Dr. E. Prideaux read a paper entitled "*A Psychologist's Attitude Towards Telepathy*" to the British Association at Cardiff.

Dr. Prideaux was at pains to show that many phenomena of Psychical Research, which appear very remarkable to persons unversed in psychology, can be explained in terms of modern psychological knowledge without introducing any "supernormal" powers. He also emphasised the fact that impartial investigation is harder to secure in this subject than in any other branch of scientific inquiry, owing to the strong emotional factors involved, which, even if unconscious, are still effective.

With these general contentions we entirely agree; we only wish that their truth were more thoroughly appreciated by many who speak confidently of "scientific proof" in connection with these matters.

But we feel that Dr. Prideaux has gravely under-estimated both the quantity and quality of the positive evidence in favour of certain phenomena, especially Telepathy.

He points out, for instance, that an experienced physician is frequently able to "size up" with surprising accuracy the patients who visit him. He attributes this to a process of unconscious or semi-conscious perception and inference, and rightly argues that a medium in an abnormally sensitive state might achieve far more remarkable and impressive results.

What he does not tell us, however, is how a medium succeeds in giving specific names, and other details, correctly describing deceased persons connected with an inquirer. No amount of conscious or unconscious perception of expressions, mannerisms, and so forth—however acute—will account for this, and the cases of it are so numerous that additional examples of them have long ceased to be of any great interest to students of the subject.

It would be easy to criticise other parts of Dr. Prideaux's paper on similar lines, but we do not propose to do so. We are sure that he

himself would be the first to admit that the observed facts are not necessarily all explicable in terms of the causes he suggests ; whether they actually are so or not is a question which further research will doubtless enable us to answer with greater certainty than we can at present feel.

The important point is that orthodox psychologists are beginning to realise that the obscure phenomena of Psychical Research are legitimate objects for their investigations.

We are very strongly of opinion that we shall never satisfactorily elucidate these intricate problems until we bring against them the latest psychological knowledge and the most powerful psychological methods.

Even if Dr. Prideaux is wrong in some of his conclusions, as we suspect, he none the less merits our thanks for stimulating interest in the subject among professional psychologists ; we confidently hope that the future will show a marked and continuous increase in this interest.



## THE PSYCHIC STRUCTURES AT THE GOLIGHER CIRCLE

BY W. J. CRAWFORD, D.Sc.

**I**N my books, *The Reality of Psychic Phenomena* and *Experiments in Psychical Science*, I have dealt with many phases of phenomena occurring at the Goligher circle. Since those books were written I have done a great amount of additional research work, some of which I intend to describe in this article. In order, therefore, to conserve space, I must assume that the reader is already familiar with the publications in question.

I have given reasons for supposing that the psychic structures which emanate from the medium's body and levitate the séance table, rap on the floor of the room, move the table about the room, and in general produce most of the phenomena of the Goligher circle, possess a variety of shapes and dimensions and have various methods of action depending chiefly upon the magnitude of the psychic forces applied. I showed that if a light table, for example, is to be levitated, the psychic structure employed is a cantilever firmly fixed to the medium's body at one end and gripping the undersurface or legs of the table with the free or working end. If, however, the levitated body is a heavy one, the psychic structure employed is not a simple cantilever, but is so modified that the reaction, instead of being thrown on the medium, is applied to the floor of the room. When the table rests upon the floor of the séance room and the experimenter stands behind it and endeavours to push it inwards towards the medium, the psychic structures used are of two kinds: (1) a pair of straight rods proceeding from the medium to the two nearest legs of the table, and (2) a pair of rods proceeding to the floor and thence to the legs of the table. (1) is used when the applied force is likely to be small and (2) when it is likely to be large with the consequent advisability of placing most of the reaction upon the floor instead of upon the medium.

The invariable rule with regard to these psychic structures is that they are as simple as possible consistent with the carrying out of phenomena. They can be divided into two classes: (1) those which seemingly do not touch the floor of the séance room during action upon the experimental table and (2) those which touch the floor somewhere.

The touching of a material body by the psychic structures is an important point in connection with them. The reader must not suppose that a psychic rod resembles, say, the handle of a broom, which

can be made to apply force to a material body anywhere over its length. The rule is that only that portion of the psychic structure which has undergone special preparation can grip a material body such as a chair or a table. In other words, the gripping part of the structure must have special labour expended on it before it is able to perform its function. It must, of necessity, be a differentiated portion of the structure. It follows from the point of view of the saving of energy that the fewer the number of these differentiated portions the better. And this is the reason that whenever possible a psychic structure at the Goligher circle has only one gripping surface ; in other words, that a cantilever, which grips with its free end and does not touch the floor anywhere over its length, is invariably used if the body to be acted upon is not too heavy, or in general, if the psychic force to be exerted is not too great.

We may call a structure which has only one differentiated gripping area a single-ended structure, and a structure which possesses two differentiated gripping areas a double-ended structure.

It requires a considerable time, from one to five minutes, depending upon the change in dimensions as well as change in form, for a single-ended structure to be converted into a double-ended one. I have experimentally observed the process many times. For instance, I have asked the operators to levitate a fairly heavily-weighted table alternately by the cantilever method and by the strut method, and I have verified their statement that it was so levitated in each case. I found that a minute or more was required to effect the necessary change in the levitating structure. And similarly with other varieties of phenomena.

What I have said about the general shape of the psychic structures at the Goligher circle has been deduced from a lengthy consideration of the mechanical actions due to the phenomena. Dozens of experiments carried out over a period of years could result in no other conclusions than those stated. Force apparatus used in various ways and under different conditions determined the locality on which psychic pressure was exerted, whether that locality was part of the levitated table or part of the floor under or near the table. All the mechanical results *without exception* agreed with the mechanics of a beam fixed to the medium's body at one end and with the other end projecting into the séance room, this latter being supported or not by the floor as circumstances dictated. In short, these mechanical experiments showed that a rigid or semi-rigid structure, at all times connected to the medium and capable of being manipulated in various ways within the circle of space formed by the sitters, was present and accounted for all the phenomena. But though the general outline of these structures was thus ascertained, though the localities of pressure were discovered and the methods in which the psychic beam was manipulated were deduced, yet these

particular experiments gave no definite information as to the exact shape or composition of the structures. They established beyond all reasonable doubt where the pressures were applied by the structures and what kind of mechanism must be employed to produce such pressures, but they did not go beyond that.

The greatest trouble experienced by the experimenter in tracing the outlines of the psychic structures at the Goligher circle lies in the fact that they are generally quite invisible under the ordinary conditions of the séance room. They are not always quite invisible, but usually so. The fact as to whether they or some parts of them are visible or not depends on several factors. I have found that under the best conditions of sitting, *i.e.*, when strangers were not present and the members of the family were all in good health, that the structures were quite invisible in the red light permitted. On several occasions under such conditions I have carefully experimented to see if I could detect any signs of visibility. I arranged matters so that a strong red light was falling upon the space below the levitated table while another source of red light was shining from behind, so that the whole area between medium and levitated table was itself quite visible. The table remained levitated for several minutes and I shifted my position into various parts of the circle, looking at the space below the table from different angles. But to all appearance the space was empty, *i.e.*, no part of the levitating structure reflected, refracted, or absorbed the light. On many similar occasions under the very best conditions for observation with the red light I have endeavoured to catch a glimpse of the structures; but always in vain on the occasions when only the members of the family were present in the room.

When, however, there are a considerable number of spectators in the séance room some of the structures have in part become visible. Also very lately there has been observed a tendency for portions of the smaller structures to become visible with only one or two persons besides the family present.

What are the conditions which result in the outlines of these psychic mechanisms taking on such a form that they can be seen by the normal human eye? In my opinion they are two in number: (1) when a considerable number of persons in good health are present in the séance room, in addition to the regular members of the circle, a certain quantity of unstable psychic matter in excess of what is strictly required is at the disposal of the operators. This matter is drawn from the spectators and it does not blend well with the psychic matter taken from the medium and the members of the circle. It pollutes, as it were, the main body of the structure, while no doubt at the same time strengthening it, for the most powerful phenomena are obtained with many spectators present. The structure changes like a stream, usually clear, which has become coloured and enlarged by a dirty tributary.

(2) Of late months the operators have become more expert in thickening the materialised skin covering the structures with the consequence that now and then they become faintly visible.

#### THE TANGIBILITY OF THE FREE OR WORKING END OF THE PSYCHIC ROD

The psychic rods seem to vary in diameter at their extremities from about half an inch to three or four inches, and the free end of each seems able to assume various shapes and different degrees of hardness. As an example of a rod in what I consider to be its simplest form, *i.e.*, without its end encumbered by design or modified in any of the several ways in which it can be modified, I append the following notes from Mr. Arthur Hunter, of Ballycastle, Co. Antrim. He describes the appearance of a rod to the sense of touch :

"Date: Friday, 5th December, 1917. Circumstances of visit: Accidental in the main. Room: The floor and table were examined by two friends who accompanied me. They also tested the strength of the levitations and the resistances offered.

"Towards the end of the séance I asked the 'operators' (having first obtained the permission of the leader of the circle) if they could place the end of the structure in one of my hands. On the reply, 'Yes,' I went inside the circle, lay down on my right side on the floor alongside the table and placed my gloved right hand between the two nearest legs of the table. Almost immediately I felt the impact of a nearly circular rod-like body about two inches in diameter on the palm of my hand, which was held palm upwards (the back of my hand was towards the floor and at a distance of about five inches from it). This circular rod-like body was flat at the end, *i.e.*, as if the rod were sawn across. It maintained a steady pressure evenly distributed over the area of contact and was soft but firm to the sense of touch. I estimate the pressure at from four to six ounces.

"Without being requested to do so, the 'operators' moved this rod-like structure until I felt the clearly defined edges of the circular blunt end. This was accompanied by a sensation of roughness, as though the edge were serrated, such a feeling, I believe, as would be given by a substance similar to very fine emery paper.

"Then I inquired if the 'operators' could touch my fingers separately with the rod. The question was not quite completed when the touching began :

"Little finger: Gentle but very distinct pressure with a much smaller rod, or by a contraction of the larger one described above. The pressure was exerted over about an inch of the length of the finger.

"Finger next little finger : Pressure intensified, but otherwise as described above.

"Middle finger : Pressure further intensified, but otherwise as above.

"I detail and emphasise my position inside the circle, also that of my hand, for about three and a half feet distant was a fireplace (without a fire) over which (about four and a half feet from the floor) there was a mantelpiece upon which rested a lighted gas jet encased in panels of red glass. Thus I could clearly see my hand and the space round and beyond the table-legs, but could not see the psychic rapping-rod.

"The impacts were upon the more sensitive side of my hand. When my fingers were being touched or pressed it seemed as if another finger were causing the sensation—a finger of very great strength. During this experiment of pressure on the fingers there was no sensation of roughness such as occurred and is described with the larger rod when I felt the edge of the circular end. My sight is very keen.

"(Signed) ARTHUR HUNTER."

Another experience may be of interest. I have often placed my foot within the circle space and asked the operators to rap on the sole of my boot. All sorts of raps were given. These mostly felt as though they were struck with a fairly soft knob—a knob of matter which, though on the softish side, was yet dense.

I would ask for harder raps, when harder and more metallic blows were struck, *i.e.*, the end of the rod became more rigid and lost some of its cushion-like or elastic aspects. A number of little hard raps was struck in succession, like blows from a tiny hammer. They were struck with lightning speed, showing that the operators have great command over the striking rod—more command, in fact, than we have over our hands and arms. After such an experience it is no longer remarkable that quick dances, reels, etc., can be rapped out on the floor of the room. I asked for the "bouncing ball" on my boot, when the end of the rod almost immediately became softer and struck my boot so that the sounds just resembled a bouncing ball. The feeling was as though the striking object was a "blobby" rounded mass. I then asked the operators to press all over the sole of my boot with the kind of pressure they use to levitate the table, *i.e.*, with the rod end used for that phenomenon. Immediately the rod termination began to change and a kind of plasma which was fairly soft and elastic spread over the sole of my boot. It felt somewhat like a thick pancake. Then, when this plasma-like stuff was fairly over the area of the boot, a tremendous force was exerted upon it, a force so great that, do what I could, I was unable to prevent my foot being pushed back along the floor. During the great pressure exerted the plasma-like ending of the rod did not become harder or more dense than it was at the beginning.

A great deal of experimental work over a number of years results



in the following data being obtained by the sense of touch concerning the rod terminations :

(1) The end of the rod can change very quickly from a soft plasma-like state to a hard metallic condition.

(2) The operators have great command over the smaller rods and can tap and strike with them at incredible speed.

(3) The condition of the end of the rod as regards size and hardness is changed on demand.

(4) The rod-termination can sometimes actually be felt gradually to increase in size ; i.e., the end of the rod has inherent powers of enlarging and a separate and distinct rod is not necessary for each size of rod-termination.

(5) The larger sizes of rod-terminations are usually fairly soft, and it is only the comparatively small ones which become dense and hard. The larger ones feel as though a skin containing a mobile but dense fluid, such as mercury, were being used as rod end.

As I have already mentioned, fitful glimpses of the structures had been obtained off and on in the ordinary red light of the séance room, but this light was insufficient to enable them to be examined at leisure, as either they were more or less transparent or else there was some other condition connected with them which usually prevented them from being seen. Nor is this very remarkable, for many years of experimental work have shown me that psychic structures are acutely sensitive to light, a result which has also been confirmed by thousands of other séances held with many mediums in different parts of the world.

On Saturday, March 8th, 1919, I had the opportunity for the first time of examining one of these structures by the eye. The means used was simple. A sheet of cardboard about a foot square was covered with luminous paint, exposed to sunlight for some hours, and then placed on the floor of the séance room within the circle space. I had tried this method in a haphazard fashion some years before without any pronounced success and I did not expect any great results on this occasion. But either the phenomena had become more powerful and stable in the interim or the operators had by practice improved their methods, for the results obtained were unexpectedly good and the use of phosphorescent paint in various forms placed a powerful instrument of research in my hands.

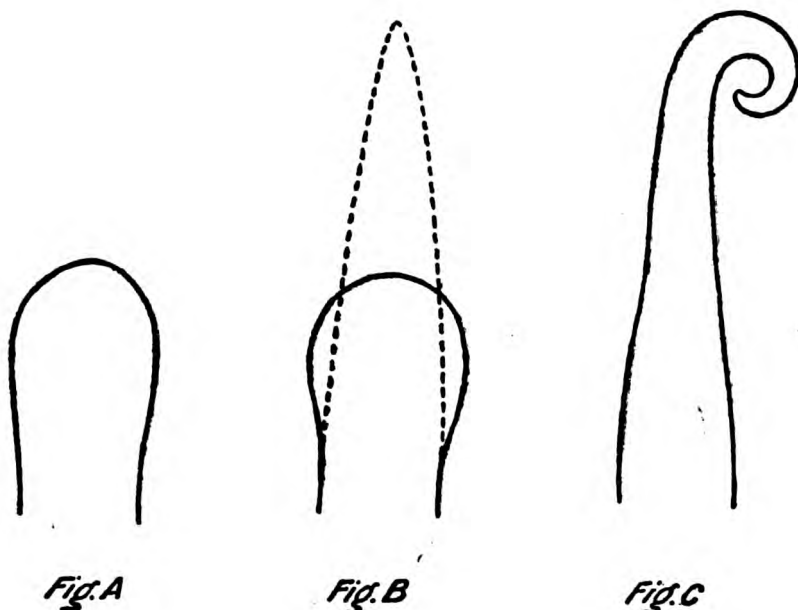
The medium had her feet and ankles locked into a test-box and it was quite impossible for her to remove her feet from it.

The operators were asked to bring the structure out from the box and to hold it over the phosphorescent sheet.

After a short time a curved body somewhat like the toe of a boot advanced over the edge of the cardboard nearest to the medium and then retired. It did this two or three times as though the operators

were testing the effect of the phosphorescent light. Evidently this light had little or no effect on the structure, for very soon the whole of its end was quite easily moved above the cardboard, to and fro, or forwards and backwards, as I desired. This (and subsequent séances) gave the following data about the working or free end of the structure :

Generally speaking, it resembles in shape the toe part of the human foot (Fig. A). The size is also approximately that of the human foot,



but is not constant, being sometimes larger and sometimes smaller than the medium's actual foot. This seems the normal unstrained form of the structure. Unlike the human foot, however, it is capable of extraordinary changes of shape, which changes were made at my request and occurred before my eyes. The "toe" part could be seen gradually lengthening until the whole thing resembled a long cone. The end portion would first contract and at the same time gradually lengthen until the shape shown dotted (Fig. B) was reached. After this stage was attained the pointed end would sometimes curl round into a hook (Fig. C), which could evidently be used as an instrument to grip things, such as a table-leg. This hook twisted and untwisted before my eyes.

Sometimes the end of the structure would contract inwards and the sides would spread out until it resembled a mushroom, or cabbage leaf, the edges being somewhat irregular. Or one side would remain normal and the other would bulge far out.



The body of the rod was of a degree of visibility somewhat less than that of the end part, and seemed to consist of a long, absolutely straight portion proceeding into the mouth of the test-box.

Mrs. Morrison (one of the sitters) says that at one séance she saw in the ordinary red light two structures proceed outwards from the neighbourhood of the feet of the medium and pass right under the table as far as the back legs, *i.e.*, the legs remote from the medium. The end of each structure then twisted itself completely round a back leg and the two structures moved upwards like two arms and levitated the table. The body of each structure was a long straight rod about the thickness of the human wrist.

In another experiment the medium's feet were again held in the test-box and the test was carried out at the beginning of the séance, when the luminosity of the cardboard sheets was at a maximum. The first appearance of the structure from the mouth of the test-box resembled the standard toe shape, as before. On request, this curved end turned completely upside down. It seemed to possess a flexible joint some inches from its termination. On several occasions the working end flattened out into a nearly circular form which was joined to a long, thin, straight arm. Sometimes the circular end tapered slightly at the extremity until the whole thing became heart-shaped. Once it lengthened out until it became very tapered, like a carrot. On several occasions two structures projected themselves simultaneously and placed themselves over the cardboard. Besides issuing over the cardboard straight out from the medium, a structure several times placed itself at right angles to her, *i.e.*, parallel to the front of the test-box, and on these occasions five or six inches of the rod portion could be seen. All the structures appeared of even density on this occasion and did not appear so flexible as at the previous séance, this being due, as I afterwards discovered, to their being more heavily materialised or packed with plasmic matter. As viewed from above they appear black (the observer was looking at them silhouetted against the luminous cardboard beneath). Several times, however, I saw them from the front by the reflected light of the luminous paint, and on these occasions they appeared white. The medium usually wore dark stockings, but experiments showed that the colour of the stockings had no effect on the colour of the structures.

At another séance the medium sat in shoes with her feet on electrical footrests which were so contrived that if she lifted either foot a bell rang. A high dividing board, between the rests, prevented one foot being placed over both rests simultaneously, and the pressures were so adjusted that twice the total weight of the shoes on either rest was required to prevent the bell ringing. The apparatus was tested before and after the séance and found correct. The medium's hands were held all the time and were visible. A large sheet of luminous card-

board was placed on the floor with its nearest edge fourteen inches from the extremity of the test apparatus.

The psychic structure was repeatedly placed over the cardboard without the bell ringing. Sometimes two structures came out alternately. One would swing over from the left of the cardboard and then the other from the right. Both appeared similar in form, with an irregularly pointed end, roughly moulded, the body being a long straight shaft.

An attempt was made to photograph the structure as it was held over the cardboard. The camera was first focussed on the cardboard. Panchromatic plates were used as it was thought that these would be more sensitive to the phosphorescent light. I explained to the operators that it would be necessary to hold the structures for a considerable time over the cardboard.

A structure emerged and placed itself above the cardboard. It was of the usual broadly-pointed shape. It placed itself in the most advantageous position for being photographed, for the camera was on the left of the medium and the structure placed itself exactly in the line between the cardboard and the lens. Mr. Stoupe, the photographer, says it was really remarkable how, without being asked, the structure placed itself in the direct line of sight.

I was sitting on the right of the medium and noticed that when the structure retired she gave an involuntary convulsive shudder.

I asked that for the second attempt at photography a pointed structure should be used. Accordingly the structure emerged in a long conical form, like a large carrot. Mr. Stoupe *mentally* asked that it should remain in position for a minute and he ticked over the seconds mentally. He says that exactly at the sixtieth second the structure disappeared. This second structure again placed itself in the line of sight of the camera. The medium shivered most violently when it returned to her. At no time did the electrical bell ring. Unfortunately it was found that the exposures were not sufficiently long to affect the plates.

#### FLASHLIGHT PHOTOGRAPHY OF THE "PLASMA" AND PSYCHIC STRUCTURES

Only within the last six months or so has it been found possible to photograph the stuff which issues from the medium's body (I call it "plasma" for want of any better word), and from which the psychic structures are built up which produce the phenomena of raps, levitations, touchings, etc. For about a year I took a photograph each séance night in the hope that success might ultimately be obtained.

The operators informed me by raps that success would finally come if I would be persistent enough.

The chief difficulty seemed to be in preventing injury to the medium. The operators said it was necessary gradually to work her up to withstand the shock of the flashlight upon the plasma; nor is this to be much wondered at when it is considered that the plasma is part of her body exteriorised in space.

I tried all sorts of arrangements to obtain the desired result. One of them was to hang a black cloth in front of the lower part of her body and to get the operators to bulge the cloth out by structures acting from behind where they would be considerably protected from the flash. This method was successful so far as it went.

However, after innumerable attempts very small patches of plasma were obtained in full view between the medium's ankles. As time went on these increased in size and variety until great quantities of this psychic stuff could be exteriorised and photographed. Then the operators began to manipulate it in various ways, building it up into columns, forming it into single and double arms, moulding it into the different shapes with which, in a general way, I had long been familiar from previous investigation. Not only did they do this, but they showed unmistakably, by means of set photographs, from what parts of the medium's body the plasma issued, and by means of ingenious arrangements devised by themselves brought out many of its properties.

By auxiliary experiments carried out chiefly by the aid of carmine dye—by a totally distinct line of investigation—I discovered from which parts of the medium's body the plasma issued. I do not intend to say anything more about this here except that the plasma has the property of adhering to various substances with which it comes into contact. If it touches powdered carmine a distinct crimson trace is left upon the clothing and skin in the track of the plasma as it retires into the body of the medium.

The medium and members of the circle are open to any tests in connection with these photographs. I have gone to elaborate precautions to make sure that the results are genuine, and amongst others have called to my aid men and women of medicine. In order to prevent subconscious action affecting the moulding of the plasma, I withheld the photographs from the medium until the present series was obtained. When I at length showed them to her she was vastly astonished and diffident about my publishing some of them.

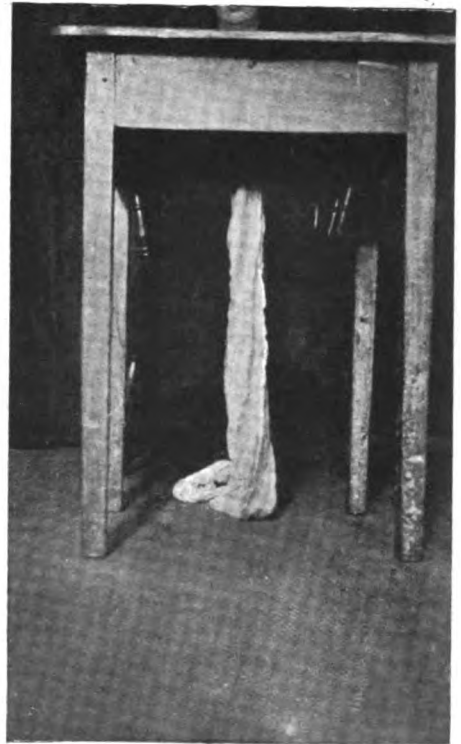
The photographic results are not yet complete. They are complete in so far as the plasma in an *unstressed* state is concerned. The shock to the medium, shown by involuntary trembling and shivering which persists for a considerable time, is very much greater when the flashlight impinges on the plasma under stress than on the unstressed stuff.



*A*



*B*



*C*

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*D*

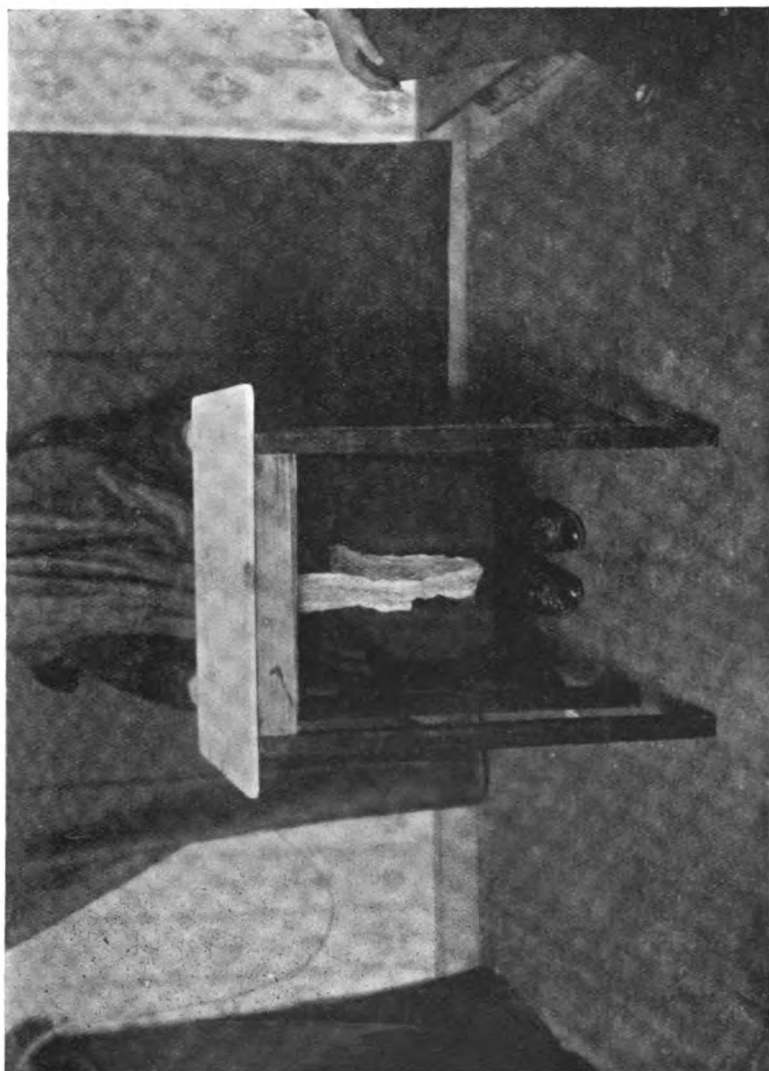


*E*



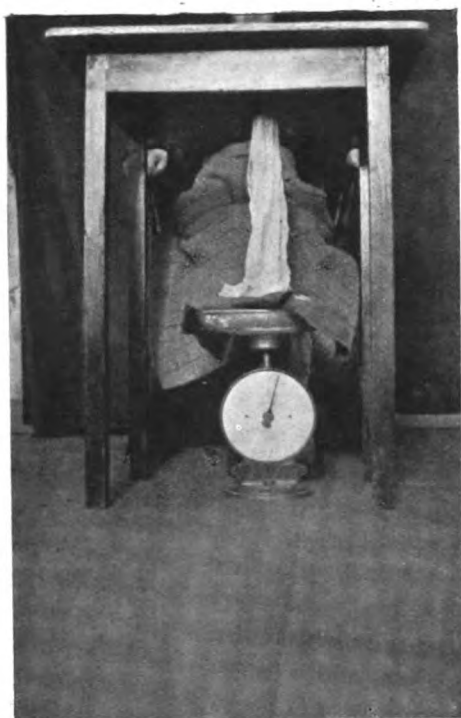
*F*

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G

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*II*

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For this reason no photograph of the completely levitated table has yet been obtained, though partial levitations and small rapping-rods of fair rigidity have been photographed. The operators are gradually working up to full levitation.

I have many dozens of different photographs showing all sorts of processes connected with the evolution of plasma and the building of it up into forms. For the purposes of this article I have selected a few which help to illustrate the fundamental principles elaborated in my two books.

#### DESCRIPTION OF THE PHOTOGRAPHS

A.—A large lump of plasma on the floor near the feet of the medium. Contact with the legs of the medium is maintained by a loose band of plasma. The large terminal lump creeps along the floor until it is centrally under the table, when it opens out and rises to the undersurface, forming a column or strut.

B and C.—Front views of two psychic columns.

D.—Side view of a psychic column.

When in position as shown the column further elongates and levitates the table. This method is used when strong levitations are required ; for example, when it is desired to resist the full downward push of a strong man on the levitated table. During a good séance these columns are immensely strong. I have, on occasion, placed my hand in the psychic matter forming them. It feels disagreeable, clammy and reptilian to the touch.

E.—Instead of advancing entire as in photograph A, the lump of plasma at the feet of the medium may begin to divide into two portions.

F.—These portions elongate and finally form two long arms which grip either the front or back legs of the table. Psychic force is then applied along the arms, which stiffen and levitate the table.

G.—The cantilever method of levitation. The plasma exudes in this case through the dress of the medium and then forms itself into the structure shown, which stiffens and lifts the table.

H.—A psychic column resting on the scalepan of a balance and rising to the undersurface of the table. A small piece of black cloth weighing about an ounce is placed on the scalepan. The balance reads a little over a pound, so that, presumably, that part of the structure resting on the balance weighs about a pound.

*Since receiving the MS. of the above article, we have heard with deep regret of Dr. Crawford's untimely death. For some six years he had devoted the whole of his spare time to the investigation of the phenomena, some of which he here describes ; his researches are undoubtedly unique in the history of the subject, and his books have aroused a more widespread*

*interest than any similar publications since those of Crookes more than forty years ago.*

*Whether future investigators succeed in confirming his conclusions or not, there can be no doubt that his determination to found them on accurate measurements and the use of mechanical apparatus is in the best traditions of scientific method and should be an object-lesson for all who attempt to elucidate these obscure problems.*

*We extend our most sincere sympathy to his wife and family.*

## "A TEST SÉANCE WITH THE GOLIGHER CIRCLE"

WE believe that it is very important that every effort should be made to check the late Dr. Crawford's researches on "physical" phenomena. We are therefore glad to publish the following account of a "test" *séance* which was recently held with the Goligher circle in Belfast.

We do not think it likely that even the most captious critic will suggest that Dr. Crawford's photographic results were due to fraudulent manipulation of the plates or cameras; but even such remote possibilities are worth eliminating and there can be no doubt that this test *séance* does so. Criticism will more probably be concentrated upon the possibility of the medium, or some other member of the circle, concealing a quantity of white gauze or similar material about her or his person and arranging it in such a manner as to simulate the "psychic structures." It will be noted in this case that all the members of the circle were carefully searched before the *séance*, that the medium had "not a shred of white fabric, whether clothing or otherwise, on her person," and that one of the photographs was taken in a good red light. The last point is especially important; it minimises the chance of the medium evading the search, extracting a quantity of fabric from its place of concealment and arranging it to simulate a mass of "plasma" during the period of darkness which usually precedes the taking of the photographs.—ED. P.R.Q.

## "AN ACCOUNT OF A TEST SÉANCE WITH THE GOLIGHER CIRCLE"

"In accordance with the request of a friend, in whose charge the late Dr. W. J. Crawford left all his papers and unfinished psychic work, I recently paid a visit to Belfast for the purpose of going through Dr. Crawford's papers, and taking over on behalf of my friend all available material dealing with the scientific investigations of the phenomena occurring with Miss Kathleen Goligher which were carried out by Dr. Crawford during the last few years.

"In order to see whether it would be possible for a comparative stranger to get the same or similar photographic results as those obtained by Dr. Crawford, I arranged for a sitting of the Goligher Circle to take place at the late Dr. Crawford's house, 1, Brookvale Terrace, Park Avenue, Sydenham, Belfast, at 7.30 p.m. on Monday, September 6th, 1920.

"It has been suggested to me that a description of the *séance* would be of interest to readers of the *Psychic Research Quarterly*. It has therefore been a pleasure to me to send an account ; as bald and accurate a statement as possible of the facts, with every detail.

"On Sunday, September 5th, the day preceding the *séance*, I went to the home of the Goligher Circle in Belfast. It was then arranged that we should hold a preliminary sitting of the Circle at about 7 p.m. on that day for the purpose of learning the wishes of the 'operators' with regard to the procedure to be observed the next evening (I might say that Miss Kathleen Goligher, the medium, had only arrived in Belfast that morning from Scotland, where she had been staying for the past four or five weeks.) It is interesting to note that nothing is ever done without first asking the advice and following the directions of the 'operators'—the unseen 'intelligence' responsible for the phenomenon. I remember Dr. Crawford telling me that he considered the success of his experiments was due to the fact that he always carried out the instructions of the 'operators'—often against what he thought was his better judgment. I was soon to have this point demonstrated very clearly. I had already made up my mind that we would take photographs with five cameras simultaneously and make three exposures. I was told by members of the Circle that I must first ask the 'operators' how many exposures were to be made. So I said, 'Friends, I propose to make three exposures to-morrow night, will that be all right?' Two distinct knocks on the floor signified 'No.' I then said, 'Are we to make only two exposures?' Again two emphatic knocks sounded on the floor. I was rather taken back, and wondered whether we were going to be allowed to take any photographs at all. 'Do you mind saying how many exposures we are to make?' was my next question. At once four distinct knocks on the floor came in reply. 'Do you mean that we are to make four exposures?' I said. Three emphatic and rather impatient knocks signified 'Yes,' with a kind of 'Have we not already told you so?' air about them.

"It will be understood that the communication with the 'operators' is made by question and answer only—not by calling the alphabet ; they confine themselves to one, two, or three knocks, which are, however, very varied in character. Sometimes the knocks are very soft, sometimes so loud that they might have been made with a sledge-hammer. They do not always come from one particular part of the room, but vary as far as position is concerned. About two and a half years ago, when I was at a *séance* with Dr. Crawford at the Golighers' house, I sat on the table inside the circle at the Doctor's request when three knocks were given on the sole of my boot. I also actually felt the plasma, which I can only describe as a clammy gripping substance. Another fact is that even the photographs cannot be taken until the

unseen 'operators' give the signal, which they do by giving three knocks on the floor. This led to a rather awkward dilemma on the Monday night. The curfew was in operation at Belfast. The last trams left at 9 p.m. Cabs were not to be had for love nor money, and thirteen people had to get to their homes in distant parts of the city before 10.30 p.m.; the alternative was to be arrested or shot. We had to remind our unseen friends on the Sunday that there was a curfew on in this city here below, but they would not be hurried. As we were waiting for the signal to take the last photograph the minutes were ticking away towards ten o'clock. It was with a feeling of relief that at last we heard the welcome three knocks. After the photograph was taken we still had to wait while they said good-night, which they do by giving three knocks for each separate person in the room in reply to their individual 'Good-night, friends.' Everything is under the absolute control of the unseen 'operators.' Without their co-operation nothing is possible.

"I was most anxious that results should be obtained in the visibility of a red light. For, so sensitive is the plasma to light, that it had been usual when taking the photographs by the flashlight process to allow two or three minutes' darkness before flashing. I was therefore delighted when, through the medium of the knocks on the floor, the 'unseen operators' gave me permission to make one exposure in the visibility of the red light. What is most important is the fact that they promised me a result under those conditions.

"I asked that the first exposure might be made in the red light. I was at once told that it must be the fourth. Their greater wisdom was proved by the fact that the first exposure was a failure—the only failure out of the four. By means of the knocks (three knocks signify 'yes,' two knocks 'no,' one knock 'doubtful') I was also told at which exposure a table was to be placed before the medium. I also received permission to stand beside the medium while the photographs were being taken, with the result that I saw with my own eyes the 'plasma' itself as portrayed on the photographs in each case. The photographs [not reproduced.—ED.] show me standing close to the medium.

"I will now describe the *séance*. On Monday, September 6th, we all assembled at the house of the late Dr. Crawford by about 7 p.m.

"As any reader of Dr. Crawford's book knows, the Goligher Circle consists of seven members, namely: Mr. Morrison, Mrs. Morrison, Miss Kathleen Goligher, Miss Lily Goligher, Miss Anna Goligher, Mr. Goligher, and Master Samuel Goligher. It is altogether a family affair, being composed of father, four daughters, son and son-in-law, for Mrs. Morrison is the sister of the medium. All the members are mediumistic to a greater or less degree. Miss Kathleen Goligher, the youngest of the four daughters, is, however, a medium of outstanding merit. On the occasion of this *séance* Miss Lily Goligher and Master

Goligher were unavoidably absent. Their places were taken by Mrs. Crawford (widow of the late Dr. Crawford) and a Mr. Keir, a friend of the Goligher family. In addition to the above there were present Mr. James Pollock, a well-known professional photographer of Belfast, two Bachelors of Medicine, a well-known artist of Belfast, and a surveyor from the north of Ireland. The names and addresses of all who were present are in the possession of the Editor of this paper. I may add that all those present at the *séance* are prepared to swear to the absolute truth of what I have written in this article.

"Two half-plate cameras and three hand cameras were used. The former were manipulated by Mr. Pollock, the professional photographer, and by Mr. S., the artist. They both used their own cameras. Mr. Pollock used a rock-crystal lens that was most kindly placed at my disposal by Mr. S. W. Woolley, of London. The three hand cameras were under the charge of Mr. Hunter, the surveyor from the north of Ireland. All five cameras were thoroughly inspected and overhauled by Mr. Pollock at his studio. In his dark-room I autographed the plates that were to be used, and after this neither the plates, films, nor cameras left my possession. For obvious reasons I was unable to autograph the films, but this is immaterial for, of course, the photographs taken simultaneously with the five cameras are identical.

"I am prepared to swear that no member of the Circle touched or even saw the plates or films. After the photographs were taken I had personal charge of the films and plates, which I locked away for the night. The next morning I took the plates and films to Mr. Pollock at his studio. He personally developed them straight away.

"The results were :

"First exposure : Nothing abnormal.

"Second exposure : A mass of plasma on the floor apparently proceeding from the medium's ankle.

"Third exposure : A mass of plasma extending from the ankle to the underside of the table and more of it on the floor (like a huge muffler).

"Fourth exposure : A small mass of plasma resting on the medium's lap.

"The lady members of the circle were thoroughly searched and examined by Dr. B. and Dr. M. before entering the *séance* room. The male members of the circle were searched by myself. I can go so far as to say that Miss Kathleen Goligher, the medium, had not a shred of white fabric, whether clothing or otherwise, on her person. This is vouched for by the two lady doctors. Before the photographs were taken the circle broke up, leaving the medium sitting in the chair with no one near her but myself. As previously stated, I saw the plasma with my own eyes three times as depicted in each photograph. It was



seen also by several others in the room. Dr. B. saw it once ; Dr. M. saw it twice ; others saw it as well.

"My sincere thanks are due to the two lady doctors and to Mr. Pollock, who came at much personal inconvenience ; also to Mr. S. and Mr. Hunter, the latter of whom took the trouble to make a special journey from the north of Ireland in order to be present. Last, but not least, my best thanks are due to each and every member of the Circle for their loyal co-operation.

"To anyone who has carefully followed the painstaking work of the late Dr. Crawford any confirmation of the truth of the results he obtained would appear to be both presumptuous and unnecessary ; but for the benefit of those sceptics who remain unconvinced I am glad to bring forward the above evidence which, I submit, is irrefutable.

"I am confident that no one who has attended such a *séance* as I have described can help feeling that they have been in the presence of an unseen intelligence with powers beyond our human understanding. I might point out one important fact, viz.—that one of the cameras used was fitted with a wide-angle lens. This camera was placed on the floor quite close to the feet of the medium for the purpose of giving a photograph of the 'plasma' at close quarters. In this photograph the mesh of the stockings is plainly visible, but the plasma shows no structure, nor can any be discovered on examining the negatives under the microscope or by other means.

"(Signed) F. McC. STEVENSON."

[This last point is important ; it constitutes additional evidence against the possibility of the substance photographed being some kind of white fabric brought into the *séance* room and arranged by the medium.

We have in our possession a copy of a statement signed by Mr. Stevenson, Mr. S., Mr. Pollock, Mr. Hunter, Dr. E. G. B., and Dr. S. M. This statement testifies to the facts that "the members of the Goligher Circle were thoroughly searched by Dr. E. B., Dr. S. M., and Mr. Stevenson, that the precautions described above were taken to ensure that neither plates nor cameras were tampered with, and that "one exposure was made in a visibility clear enough to enable everyone in the room to detect any movement of either Miss Goligher or any member of the Circle, all of whom were sitting at some distance from the medium."

[The statement concludes with the following words : "We unhesitatingly affirm that this *séance* has been conducted under strict test conditions ; that the phenomena we have seen, and the photographs that have been taken of the 'plasma,' are results which it is an absolute impossibility for any human being to have engineered or produced."

We shall be glad to consider similarly careful records of investigation from others who are studying these subjects.—ED. P.R.Q.]



## THE POWERS OF THE UNCONSCIOUS

BY KENNETH RICHMOND

**W**HATEVER the nature of "mediumship"—the quotation marks are to prevent the word from begging our main question—it is well enough established by now that the unconscious mind of a sensitive plays a large part, if not the sole part, in the production of psychical phenomena. It was for long believed, in the reliance upon material fact that characterises our epoch, that the lifting of concrete objects without physical contact, once properly attested, would prove the operation of wills and forces outside our own. Levitation and other physical effects have now been attested by Dr. Crawford's researches into the Goligher phenomena ; and the evidence goes to prove that the forces exercised proceed from the sensitive, and are exercised by or through her unconscious will. In that alternative, "by or through," we are back at the old problem.

A distinguished philosopher lately put forward another aspect of the same problem, in conversation. We know what extraordinary manifestations of energy can occur in hypnosis, in dissociated or semi-dissociated states ranging from normal fear or anger to the manic conditions, and under the influence of great emotions : are we to conclude that these energies are unlocked from a personal store, the product of bio-chemical processes and their possible psychical analogues within the individual ? Or does the individual draw upon some extra-personal, perhaps collective, reservoir of vital force ? The question can only be asked in order to leave it open ; but it is a matter of some importance that it should be left open, since the emergency resources that a human being can put forth have at least the appearance of transcending those of a closed individual system. Perhaps the most striking instances are to be drawn, not from the performances of the healthy organism—such as the astounding feats of endurance recorded during the war—but from the energy manifested by sick and enfeebled persons. When a patient is taking a quantity of food far below the calorie-limit that chemistry seems to require, is sleeping badly, has been long out of touch with healthy metabolism, and yet keeps up a steady and long-continued output of energy beyond the normal range, it is hard to think that his own dynamic system alone is at work. He is not like an engine and dynamo with a lighting circuit attached. The analogy that springs to mind is, rather, that of a lamp in circuit with a

main source of supply ; often of a lamp, in process of being burnt out by current of a higher voltage than it can stand, glowing with a light of abnormal whiteness and intensity.

These suggestions may point to a reason why, in discussing the powers of the unconscious, our instinct is not to limit those powers within the personal radius. Whether the instinct is a superstition or not is another matter : it exists, and its existence is a factor in the central problem of psychical research, the problem of "by or through ?" The instinct to believe that psychic impulse flows into expression through the individual, rather than is generated within him, has its effect in two opposite senses. Some thinkers repress the instinct and cling at all costs to the "by" theory, manifestly neglecting or distorting facts that might call it in question ; others show the contrary bias, and will have no modification of the "through" hypothesis. Others, again, try to determine how much can be done by the individual psyche, conscious or unconscious, and how much may be done through it ; theirs is the more difficult and the more repaying task.

One great difficulty in distinguishing the "by" from the "through" hypothesis is that the two can never be entirely held apart. The human intellect, with its precarious hold upon the outer fringes of present knowledge, is apt to fall back for security upon a false simplification : a thing is either A or B ; if it is not A, then it is B, and that settles it. But that by no means settles it when we have to deal with these two alternative functions of the psyche. We have to consider a stage of affairs that recalls the early struggles with algebra in our school days, when we had to think at the same time of descending powers of  $x$  and of ascending powers of  $y$ . As we look into the evidence presented by psychical phenomena, we find at one end of the scale such fantasies as any dream- or trance-mind could produce from its own resources, without effort ; while at the other end we find, not the stuff that dreams are made of, but material that no single mind, as we know the nature of mind, could have woven unaided. Telepathy between terrestrial minds is the least of the "through" functions that we have to postulate for an explanation.

Conscious experiment in telepathy has demonstrated the transference from mind to mind of only very simple images and concepts. It is another question whether the telepathic powers of the unconscious may not be far wider. I shall offer such conclusions on this point as I have gathered from personal study of the unconscious, later on in the present discussion. But first, it may be well to state some general classification of the evidence for supernormal powers in sensitives. It will be seen that the likelihood of telepathy is given its due place in the following scheme.

In Class I. let us group all knowledge, shown by or through the

sensitive, which is within the conscious or unconscious memory-store of anyone present at the sitting. Such would be the accurate description of a deceased relative of the sitter, with reproduction of characteristic mannerisms and personal reminiscences. (I assume, of course, that knowledge previously in the mind of the sensitive has been ruled out by proper test conditions.) Here we can suppose the material to be put together and presented by the sensitive's unconscious, if we grant it the power to draw upon the memory-store of the sitter. Or we can combine this explanation with another: that the wish of the sitter for a given message operates by telepathic suggestion upon the unconscious of the sensitive. No satisfactory evidence for or against such powers is on record. It might be obtained if, shortly after a productive sitting, both sensitive and sitter would allow an examination of the unconscious content by either the hypnotic or the psycho-analytic method.

In this class we may include a type of evidence that I have often encountered, in which a sensitive, after an unproductive sitting with one person, produces material of evidential interest to that person at a subsequent sitting with other people who are in no way concerned. (This, also, when there has been no opportunity meanwhile for normal leakage of information.) I shall consider later what likelihood there is that such effects are produced by the unconscious in order to give apparent reinforcement to the evidence; only remarking that I have known the phenomenon to occur several times in the case of an educated and critical sensitive who consciously attached no extra value to this "out-of-context" evidence, attributing its retardation to some delayed psychological process. This sensitive, in the presence of a sitter who is a comparative stranger, has a resistance against broaching any subject of emotional significance to the sitter, and therefore, I think, tends to bring out repressed material on later and irrelevant occasions.

In Class II. we may place knowledge shown by or through the sensitive which is not attributable to anyone present (nor to the *residua* of previous sittings), but can be verified by reference to some one other person. Such was a case in which, among a quantity of Class I. evidence, reference was made by the purporting communicator to an incident said to have occurred to a friend in the Burmese jungle, ten days before the sitting, which took place in London. Inquiry proved the account to be correct. (I cite these cases only as being typical of their class, without taking up the space that would be necessary for attestation; similar and fully-attested cases are on record.) Here production of the evidence by the sensitive alone would imply a power of the unconscious to range among the many minds that there are, to choose one mind, and from it to take material that would work up into colourable evidence. This wears the telepathic hypothesis rather thin, and it is easier to take refuge from credulity about

survival in the idea of a common reservoir in which people's memories, thoughts, and emotions are pooled, and to which the unconscious of a sensitive can obtain some fitful access. Such a reservoir would be the collective or non-personal unconscious of Dr. Jung's system ; but we have no evidence that this entity is much concerned with the detailed experiences of individuals. It is, however, greatly concerned with hero-myths and such archetypes of human experience ; and we have to be on our guard, among evidence such as that of doings in the war, against the heroic story that bears the imprint of collective origin, but may prove by coincidence to fit closely to some actual heroic deed.

It is worth while to keep a separate Class III. for any body of evidence that is outside the knowledge of the sitters, and cannot have been within the knowledge of any one living person. An instance of the kind is the reference by or through the sensitive to a specified page in a certain book, whose locality and position were described. The contents of the page were unknown to the sitters, but could be presumed as within the unconscious memory of the book's owner, who had no concern with the matter under research and knew nothing of it. What was not within this gentleman's knowledge was the relevance of the indicated passage in the book to a piece of automatic writing also referred to at the sitting ; this relevance was not known to anyone until the book was found according to the description and the specified page turned to.

It would seem that to stretch the known and the presumable functions of telepathy between the living to cover material of this order is applying a greater credulity to the telepathic hypothesis than any credulity that we wish to avoid. If we desire to rule out the hypothesis of survival and communication it is simpler to attribute to the unconscious practically unlimited powers of perception at a distance, under the name of clairvoyance, and to proceed to investigate this hypothesis on its merits. But it is best, for those who find it psychologically possible, to investigate all the hypotheses that our data seem to require.

For completeness I may suggest a fourth and a fifth class : IV. for "physical" phenomena such as Dr. Crawford has investigated, and V. for unverifiable accounts of life in a discarnate phase of being. The latter class is not without scientific interest, since the accounts produced by different sensitives, including those who have made no study of existing records, agree remarkably in certain broad essentials. This does not constitute evidence of the order of cross-correspondence, but it shows a tendency of the unconscious (the "collective unconscious" of Jung) to produce fantasies of after-life that are broadly consistent and true to type ; and we know that the fantasy-making power of the unconscious is one of the means by which the human

mind can reach out towards truth—truth apprehended through symbol rather than through fact. The *consensus gentium* shown in the survival-fantasies of the peoples is something to be treated with critical reserve, but with respect; it is a collective wish-fulfilment, but the wish is a dynamic thing that can only function in terms of some correspondence with reality.

In passing from this more general survey to a consideration in some little detail of the powers of the unconscious as they come under observation in psycho-analytic work, it will be necessary to speak somewhat more diffusely. Investigation of the unconscious has made great strides in a short span of time, but the volume of material and technique that we already have to our hand seems only a beginning, and, as is natural from its origin in therapeutics, is little co-ordinated except for clinical ends. We are especially ignorant, I think, as to the comparative value and quality of unconscious material springing from different "levels" of the psyche. (Spatial metaphor is inevitable, but I will ask to have it read as nothing more than metaphor.) In the dream-life—or, to be more exact, the dream-life as we make shift to retain and represent it in conscious memory—we have a fairly homogeneous presentation of the unconscious product; yet dreams range from crude wish-fulfilment of the childish or primitive type, through ascending strata of the more developed wishes and desires, to a level at which we encounter veridical dream-impressions that suggest some supernormal touch with reality.

It may be of use to record my own idea of the incidence of such impressions, after the investigation of some thousands of dreams experienced by nervous patients, by ordinary people (if there are any), and by sensitives. As I have suggested, the dreams of sensitives appear to show little connection with any phenomena that they produce through automatism. The usual empirical rule of psycho-analysis seems to be observed—that the dream gives vent only to that which is repressed, not to that which is finding other outlets. It would be interesting to analyse the dreams of a professional sensitive who is taking a holiday, and studiously avoiding (repressing) all associations with psychical work. To judge by the fact that most people dream, directly or disguisedly, of the things they "put out of their minds," the sensitive's holiday might be prolific of supernormal dream-material. I have not yet had the opportunity to go into this question with any thoroughness, but I have been able to study the dreams of two or three sensitives who, for one reason or another, have been temporarily repressing their supernormal activities; and the indications certainly favour the view that these activities, deprived of other expression, are represented in the dream-life. I speak with caution on this point, because no completely evidential case has come under my notice in this department of observation.



In the dreams both of nervous patients and of "ordinary" people, on the other hand, there seems to be a distinct tendency towards supernormal manifestation of the simpler kind. The great majority of dreams are subjective—they concern the dreamer's own interests alone; but now and then a dream turns up in which the dreamer anticipates, surprisingly, some event that he could not normally have foreseen. These anticipations are nearly always of a type that suggests unconscious telepathy, and usually point to the "arrival-message," which is commonly recognised as the easiest kind of spontaneous telepathic phenomenon. Most of us know the experience of thinking or speaking of a person just before that person makes an unexpected appearance. It is a common enough experience to have a proverbial phrase applied to it: "talk of the devil . . ." or, in politer paraphrase, "talk of an angel." An equally common experience, for many people, is to wake in the morning with the thought of a particular person in mind, and then to find an unexpected letter from that person on the breakfast-table. Notes recording the proportion of hits and misses among these impressions have convinced me that their accuracy goes far beyond coincidence. But in this age of objective scientific work and thought many of us have—I have, myself—a strong tendency to deny any evidence of supernormal faculty if an everyday explanation can be invented, and to neglect the evidence if it cannot. The process is one of psychological resistance and repression. And the usual consequence appears to ensue: that which is resisted and repressed in conscious life finds its expression in the dream-life.

My own small experience may perhaps be worth recording, as an instance of the observations that I have made in a number of cases. In dealing with one's own material, one has at least the opportunity to criticise it at every turn, and to eliminate the factor of self-deception as far as possible. For some years I was interested, unscientifically, in the fact that I often happened to think of particular people just before I happened to meet them, or to hear from them, unexpectedly. The interest went no further than the unspoken comment, "Well, that's odd!" At this time, so far as I can remember, I had no "arrival-messages" in dreams; and I think I should have remembered them if there had been any of note, because my attention was well directed towards the subject. Then, as I studied experimental and descriptive psychology, I began to feel that this unscientific interest of mine was very unscientific, and that I had better drop it. Descriptive psychology seemed to hold no place even for the rudiments of telepathy. But as soon as I cast out—or repressed—the apprehension of "arrival-messages," and forbade their entry into conscious thought, they began to crop up in my dreams. I was continually dreaming of this or that person who duly put in an appearance on the following day, or of this or that letter which duly arrived by the

morning delivery. I began to attend to the phenomenon, in spite of my scientific resistances; and I found at once that the "arrival-messages" came through to conscious thought, and ceased to occupy the attention of the dream-mind.

Much attention has been given, and rightly given, to the dream as a prime indicator of the unconscious *status quo*. In psycho-therapy, and in all that concerns the subjective personal life, dream-analysis has an importance and value that we are only beginning to explore and realise. But it seems to me that the dream is not ordinarily, or naturally, the vehicle of extra-personal influence. The many cases of supernormal dreams that are on record would, I suspect, prove on investigation to represent repressed impressions. It seems to be the primary function of dream-life simply to release repressed psychic material; this material, as psycho-analysis shows, may be of the highest importance and value for the individual; but the point I wish to suggest is that the dream-life is not the region of the psyche in which to look for the extra-personal interests of the unconscious, except in so far as these may have become repressed.

By "extra-personal" here, I do not mean to include dream-material springing from the collective unconscious—the variants of universal dream-myths which are personal to the dreamer in virtue of his membership of common humanity. It has already been suggested that this material should be studied on its own merits, as distinguished from the evidence that points to telepathic impression from individual sources outside the recipient's mind. It is this type of impression with which I consider the dream-activity to have no primary concern, unless the factor of repressed interest becomes involved.

[...] Dream-analysis, on the other hand, should be of value in diagnosing unconscious fraud in sensitives; and the conscientious sensitive, to whom unconscious fraud is the greatest of bugbears, should especially welcome this method of criticism. One of the consistent functions of the dream is to throw up symbolic presentations, often subtly satirical, of the dreamer's unconscious insincerities. The analyses that I have been able to conduct have been with sensitives who knew something of psychology and were carefully self-critical; the problem therefore was fully present in conscious thought, was not repressed, and did not emerge in the dream-life. What did emerge, however, was a tendency that had not occurred to conscious speculation: a tendency to confuse purporting communicators with the *dramatis personæ* of the dream-life. It was not so much unconscious fraud that was indicated as entanglement of the psychological factors. In one surprising instance the dreamer (who was much influenced by a mother-complex) was approached by the figure of a deceased male friend, the purporting communicator of recent sittings; this figure attempted to speak, and then abruptly turned into a representation of the dreamer's (living) mother.



Those who are familiar with the subject will anticipate what the analysis showed: interest in the deceased friend, and the thought of death and separation, aroused the wish for liberation from the mother-image; and the wish was symbolised in the dream by placing the mother-figure instead of the friend among the dead.

This type of confusion, due to the interference of a personal complex, is certainly one that it may be profitable to unravel by dream-analysis, although, as I have suggested, it hardly falls within the province of unconscious deception. It may easily do so, however; especially with two common classes of purporting communicators—the “guide” or “mentor,” and the childlike “control.” These, supposing them to have spirit-individuality (I have studied some extended evidence, through cross-correspondence, for the individuality of a “control,” and it is certainly hard to explain away), may easily become entangled with the parental complexes on the one hand, and with infantile, regressive tendencies of the sensitive on the other. Dr. Jung has studied a valuable case (*Analytical Psychology*, Ch. 1.) in which all the phenomena of an apparent sensitive seem referable to a father-complex as the source of exalted “communications,” and an infantile personality as the basis of a child “communicator.” In this case no evidential material is recorded, and the whole body of phenomena appears to be an overflow from dream-life of personal and collective unconscious fantasy, the collective material showing the usual conformity to type, I wish Dr. Jung had been able to record the dreams of this subject, especially before and during a phase when semi-conscious and conscious fraud supervened with the gradual cessation of genuinely unconscious phenomena. The question of personal sincerity would probably have been strongly brought forward.

The evidence that I can myself adduce from analysis of the dreams of sensitives is, as I have indicated, of a negative character; but negative evidence must be given its due place. In the cases that I have studied there has been no sign in the material produced—by speaking or writing during trance, and by “automatic” or “influenced” script obtained without trance—of conscious or unconscious fraud. The dream-material of the sensitives, taken at the same time, has equally failed to show, upon analysis, that any humbug or self-deception in connection with the sittings has lain upon the conscious of the sensitives. But it is noteworthy that the same analyses have shown, as is usual, the most unsparing criticism from the unconscious upon any inconsistencies of character and of general attitude towards life in these people. It is those who make the strongest efforts for real sincerity and candour who find themselves faced with the most candid criticism from the unconscious, often amounting to mordant satire, upon their yet unrealised inconsistencies. It seems hardly likely that the dream-critic should portray, with the unsparing irony of the

caricaturist, every kind of unrealised lapse from intellectual and moral candour except the very serious lapse that would be implied in the production of faked "communications."

Turning from the region of dream-life, and applying the methods of analytical psychology to the actual product of trance, automatism, and "influence," we can adopt the usual and obvious division of this product into evidential and non-evidential matter. Other divisions are critically valuable, such as that between "serious" and "trivial" material, but this is the most broadly useful. Evidential matter stands on its own basis: we have to test its correspondence with ascertainable objective reality and draw our conclusions or our working hypotheses. A summary of method in the comparative classification of evidence has already been sketched. It remains to consider what tests we can apply to the large proportion of non-evidential matter. These tests must be of a subjective, not an objective, character, and analytical psychology is giving us a considerable technique for the application of subjective tests.

Non-evidential material falls roughly into three divisions: (a) muddles—chiefly apparent efforts to produce evidential matter, without success, and confusions said to be due to imperfect or mixed "control"; (b) messages of personal interest to the sitters, but not scientifically classifiable as evidence; and (c) statements, necessarily unverifiable, about life "on the other side." It may be well to consider in order the analysis of these three types of material.

(a) Muddles seem to occur in the largest proportion among the less felicitous efforts of professional sensitives. The non-professional, having nothing in particular to transmit on any given occasion, transmits nothing in particular, and there is no more to be said about it; the professional must answer an impulse to give value for money, or to respond to the desires of clients who have made a special journey to obtain the interview. I have given special attention to the analysis of certain muddled, unsuccessful sittings with professional sensitives (having shorthand reports of the sittings in detail), in order to search out any evidence of conscious or unconscious fabrication. It seemed to me that this would be the most likely field in which to find it. Certainly these sensitives were reputed to be of high grade, and did not often give confused material, to me or to others; perhaps it is because of their special high-mindedness that I could not discover, in their worst muddles, any sign of fabrication or fraud. At their best, they gave evidence of one class or another; at their worst, they gave what I can only describe as honest confusion. Students and practitioners of analytical psychology will know how sharp is the distinction between honest and guilty confusion, though the guilt be deeply unconscious. I can only decide that, seeking the best, I have met with fortunate examples in my researches among professional sensitives. But the

conclusion also emerges that there are conscientious and high-minded followers of an activity which ought not, ideally, to be a paid, professional activity at all. (Still, there are professions that give less for love and also, on occasion, less for money.)

(b) Messages of personal interest to the sitters, but not scientifically classifiable as evidence, are particularly troublesome to the investigator. There are two extremes of rational opinion. One is that such messages can be credited if they are accompanied by a proportion of good evidential material. The other is that they must be regarded, provisionally at least, as fantasy, and that nothing but strict evidence must be admitted as possible truth. The latter view, on any hypothesis of communication, does some violence to our sense of human probabilities: if there are communicators, they will surely try to converse with us, and not only to construct and present evidence. Yet it is impossible, from the most generous standpoint, to know how much of the conversation can be called their own and how much may be due to the unconscious mental workings of the sensitive—not to mention those of the “control.” This very difficult question of discrimination should become easier as we develop the technique of analytical psychology into a natural habit of mind. At present we can only say, “It *felt* as though So-and-so were speaking himself”; or, “That part didn’t *seem* quite like him.” We need to translate these feelings and seemings into terms that can be clearly stated and considered; and the analytical technique is bringing these terms within reach. When we can recognise and describe characteristic affects in a purporting communicator, and distinguish these from the typical affects of the sensitive, we shall be on the way towards a reliable system of subjective tests. And when the sensitive and the purporting communicator are of widely different psychological type (extreme extravert and extreme introvert, for example) the test will be all the more trustworthy. There is a respectable body of conservative opinion which holds that when we have brought feelings and intuitions to the test of intelligent statement and criticism we have only pinned down the butterfly—and killed it; but it is to be remembered that all advance in clear thought, and in feeling and intuition as well, has depended upon our increasing power to label our concepts, and so to hold them in mind. And we are learning to think clearly about our butterfly—which is, by the way, an ancient symbol of the Psyche—without pinning it down upon the entomological setting-board.

(c) Before considering the statements that sensitives produce about the nature of life “on the other side,” I ought perhaps to remark that I am personally biased towards leniency in the criticism of this type of non-evidential material (non-evidential, except in so far as the *consensus gentium* is evidence); I admit a compensatory bias towards strictness in criticising detailed evidence. We here have

fantasy, of which we have to judge the content—though not the artistry—by the same criterion that inspires our judgment of Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, Milton's *Paradise Lost* and Dante's *Inferno*, *Purgatorio* and *Paradiso*. We do not admire these works only for their style: Poe, Beaudelaire and Wilde can outshine them in technique. We admire them also for something which we call their inspiration. We ask whether the essential thing that they say feels true to us: and we admit their greatness—they “live,” for us, in spite of many obvious crudities—because our unconscious (or superconscious) sense of truth is satisfied by their main statement. In this region of criticism we have to consider not only the powers of the unconscious as they come to expression in the work of the poet, the prophet and the sensitive, but the corresponding resonance that their utterance induces in ourselves. In fact, we have to consider not only the powers of their unconscious, but also the powers of our own unconscious.

If analytical psychology teaches us anything, it is that judgment on ultimate questions, however much we emphasise and re-emphasise our focus of attention upon rational proof, must be swayed by the nature of our non-rational feelings—whether irrational or super-rational, whether born of prejudice or of intuition. If we say that we have no unconscious bias we deceive ourselves: we are proclaiming the absurdly self-evident fact that we are not conscious of any unconscious bias. The most valuable fruits of analytical psychology, in psychical research as in other things, will be the knowledge that it gives us of our own hitherto unrecognised bias at a lower level than that of conscious judgment, and the power to distinguish this from the intuitional function of the unconscious, operating on a higher, though a less organised, level than that of reason.

There is much to be applied, and much more to be discovered and worked out, in the technique of psycho-analysis for the purpose of criticising both the working and the product of the sensitive's mind, and for estimating evidence in itself. But even more important than the criticism of the process and the product is the criticism of our own criteria.

Anyone who brings analytical psychology to bear upon psychical research will do well to use it, first of all, for the examination of his own real attitude towards the problems that are involved.

It may perhaps be of some illustrative value to readers unfamiliar with the psychology of the unconscious, and also of interest to those who are acquainted with the subject, if I conclude with one small example of the leakage of a sensitive's forgotten memories into a communication that otherwise appears to have been of supernormal origin. I would gladly have included more examples in this article, but adequate description devours space.

This was an instance of Class II. evidence. The sensitive, an educated man who devotes some time to the development of his special faculties in the intervals of an active professional life, obtains his material without actual trance, passing into a light hyperoid state in which he dictates to an amanuensis the impressions that come to him. These impressions have often proved to be of evidential interest. On the occasion in question he gave details about a purporting communicator entirely unknown to himself or to either of the two other persons present at the sitting. Reference was given, for verification, to a lady who was barely known to those present. The following details turned out to be correct : the two Christian names of the purporting communicator, age at death, and the time that had elapsed since death ; the description of the purporting communicator was verified (with one exception, to be noted in a moment), and several personal touches were recognised as accurate and distinctive.

The one exception was that the purporting communicator was described, among other and correct details, as having a corner broken off one front tooth. (This is the point that proved to be of interest in the analysis of errors in communication.) The lady to whom reference was made, while verifying the details that have been mentioned, was puzzled about this reference to the front tooth. The only thing she could suggest was that the purporting communicator had distinctly projecting front teeth, and might have intended to depict this feature. The allusion to a broken tooth was obviously incorrect.

Investigation of the sensitive's latent memories, brought to light by the method of free association, produced these facts : some twelve or fourteen years ago, as a schoolmaster, he had had two pupils under his care who were twins and remarkably alike. Among other resemblances, the two boys both had distinctly projecting front teeth. It was very difficult to tell them apart. The only difference you could notice was that one of the twins had a corner broken off one of his front teeth.

If we dare to speculate, upon the hypothesis of survival and communication, the inference is plain enough. The communicator wished to convey the special feature of "projecting teeth." The sensitive—hyper-sensitive in this instance—had an unconscious desire to get everything right, down to the last detail. He was presented with "projecting teeth" as one of the verifiable details. This was not enough : he had a conscientious worry about getting details absolutely correct. Many people have projecting teeth . . . and thereupon, unconscious memory threw up a way of distinguishing between people who have this dental peculiarity. "The twins were exactly alike ; but you could tell them apart by that chip off the front tooth. . . ." The reader will see how the wish for an extreme accuracy may have led to the introduction of a fallacious detail from the unconscious store.



In my experience "unconscious fraud," brought to light by the technique of analytical psychology, has chiefly resolved itself into this over-conscientious desire to get details exactly right: the sensitive will not remain passive enough to the material that comes up for expression; his unconscious (or rather, one of its many levels) interferes, like a young and too eager sub-editor. And in interfering, be it noted, it does not produce colourable evidence, but a muddle that only contaminates good evidence until its genesis is exposed.

There can be little doubt, however, that the converse is true: that as the too conscientious sensitive can err in the supposed interests of precision, so the sensitive who is not conscientious enough may err in another direction. I have not had much opportunity, as yet, to analyse the material of consciously or unconsciously fraudulent "mediums"; but the inference seems plain that false material can be put up to eke out any scantiness or absence of the true, as well as to confuse the true when it is present. I must say that I have my doubts whether consciously fraudulent "mediumship" is capable of bringing conviction to any but the most stupid, or the most wilfully gullible, investigators. We all know, more or less, how the conscious mind works, and are on our guard against its less ingenuous workings. What we have to understand, in psychical research, is the far subtler working of the unconscious mind: we must know when it is being honest, when it is being more than honest (one grievous fault of the unconscious), and when it is being less than honest—another grievous fault, but perhaps easier of detection. Analytical psychology promises to enable us to cut plain honesty, in the unconscious, free from its encumbrances on either side.

When we have arrived at plain honesty, in the unconscious, we shall know what the unconscious powers really are. It must be admitted, without demur, that this is a counsel of perfection. In our present stage of civilisation, we have not yet reached plain honesty in all our conscious dealings.



## THE EVIDENCE FOR TELEPATHY: AN HISTORICAL SURVEY

By E. R. DODDS

**W**ITHIN the past thirty years, despite the continued incredulity of the great body of orthodox psychologists and physiologists, a belief in the possibility of communication between mind and mind otherwise than through the known channels of sense has become very general among the ordinary educated public. One is frequently assured that "telepathy" is now a demonstrated and established truth, like the law of gravitation, which it would be frivolous to doubt and incurably wrong-headed to deny. But more often than not further conversation shows that this confident and even bigoted faith rests on an exceedingly inadequate apprehension both of the strength and of the weakness of the evidence at present available. Hence it has seemed worth while to attempt here a brief summary and discussion of some of the more important types of evidence. No original theory is advanced, and detailed exposition of cases is of course precluded by considerations of space; the intention is merely to exhibit the main lines which investigation has hitherto followed, and by means of references and bibliography to furnish some clue to those who would pick their way among the growing mass of real and pretended authorities. It cannot be too often pointed out that the evidence for phenomena so sporadic and so disputable as those with which *Psychical Research* concerns itself must depend for its force on cumulative effect; it is only the beginner who asks for a single "crucial case." The question of telepathy, in particular, is an inductive problem; and the strength of the affirmative position cannot fairly be estimated except by those who have made some first-hand study of the documents in bulk. The present paper is designed to serve as an introduction to such study.

The evidence will be considered under three heads: (1) experimental cases; (2) spontaneous cases; (3) phenomena provisionally referable to telepathy as an alternative to other supernormal faculties or agencies.

### I

Perhaps the earliest alleged case of experimental thought-transference is that of the Ursuline nuns at Loudun, of whom Gaston d'Orléans reports that they obeyed orders transmitted mentally,<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> See Richet in *Revue Philosophique*, Dec., 1884.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century De Puységur and other early "magnetisers" claimed to exercise a similar power over their subjects;<sup>1</sup> but it would seem that they did not allow sufficiently for the possibility of muscle-reading and other forms of conscious or unconscious inference. Occasional observations of "community of sensation" under hypnosis are also recorded by the older English mesmerists.<sup>2</sup> Professor Barrett, however, in a paper read before the British Association in 1876, was the first to isolate these results from the atmosphere of charlatanry which surrounded them and draw attention to their possible significance. About the same time the "willing-game" came into vogue in England, and cases began to be observed which did not seem explicable by the simple hypothesis of muscle-reading. Popular interest was further excited by the exhibitions of "thought-reading" given by the Zancigs and other public performers. In 1881 systematic experiment was set on foot by the group of which Prof. Barrett, Prof. Sidgwick, Prof. Balfour Stewart, Edmund Gurney, and Frederic Myers were the most important members. They became convinced that there was at least a *prima facie* case for acceptance of the new mode of communication, and in the following year they established the *Society for Psychological Research*. On the continent the beginnings of the serious experimental investigation of telepathy may be dated from Prof. Charles Richet's communication to the *Revue Philosophique*, December, 1884.

In the same year the *American Society for Psychological Research* was founded in Boston; and in Paris the next year saw the creation of the *Société de Psychologie Physiologique*, which has paid considerable attention to telepathy. At present associations for Psychological Research exist also in Germany, Sweden, and other countries.

Before proceeding to summarise some of the more striking results obtained, it may be well to indicate certain sources of error which are liable, unless special precautions are taken, to vitiate such experiments:

(a) *Collusion* between "agent" (thought-transmitter) and "percipient" (thought-reader). This is certainly the explanation of most, if not all, public exhibitions of "thought-reading." For a description of the various ingenious codes employed, see Mr. Baggally's *Telepathy Genuine and Fraudulent*.<sup>3</sup> Collusion will hardly, however, be alleged as accounting for the results of experiment in which accredited investigators themselves acted as agents.

(b) *Muscle-reading*. This is now generally accepted as the easiest explanation of most cases of "pin-finding," etc., where the percipient,

<sup>1</sup> Puységur, *Mémoires pour servir à l'établissement du Magnétisme*, pp. 22 29ff, Pététin, *Electricité Animale*, p. 127, etc.

<sup>2</sup> E.g., Elliotson in *Zoist V.*, pp. 242-5.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. also Bonjean, *L'Hypnotisme et la Suggestion Mentale*, pp. 261-316; and Stanley Hall in *American Journal of Psychology*, 1888, I., pp. 128 ff.

holding the hand of one of the company, gropes his way to the concealed object. The unconscious contractions and alterations of pressure which furnish him with the necessary indications have been experimentally studied by Gley,<sup>1</sup> who in sixteen cases out of twenty-five obtained tracings showing that these movements increased in intensity as the object was approached and ceased completely as soon as it was reached. Hence in the simpler types of experiment, and especially where the answer may take the form of a plain "Yes" or "No," it is essential to exclude contact between agent and percipient. Muscle-reading, however, can scarcely account for the transference of complex mental pictures (as in Prof. Murray's experiments).<sup>2</sup>

(c) Various forms of *hyperæsthesia*. in particular, lip-reading, cornea-reading, reading of unconscious muscular movements, and abnormal acuteness of hearing. These are especially difficult to guard against, as we can hardly assign any definite limits to unconscious perception and inference at close quarters, and the percipient himself is liable to mistake information so obtained for a genuine telepathic impression. As Podmore observes,<sup>3</sup> "It is not the friend whom we know whose eyes must be closed and his ears muffled, but the 'Mr. Hyde' whose lurking presence in each of us we are only now beginning to suspect." Some exceedingly remarkable instances of seeming hyperæsthesia in hypnotised subjects have been recorded;<sup>4</sup> and in view of these, had we no reports of successful experiments other than those in which agent and percipient sat in the same room, one might be tempted to attribute all telepathic phenomena to a temporary hyperæsthesia of one or other of the known senses. But no hyperæsthesia can account, e.g., for the success of M. M. Gibert and Janet in inducing sleep at a distance.<sup>5</sup> And even as applied to cases of thought-reading at close quarters, by percipients in the normal state, this explanation would in some instances require us to postulate a delicacy of perception far in excess of anything hitherto experimentally established.<sup>6</sup>

(d) *Coincidence of number-habits, diagram-habits, etc.*, between agent and percipient. This possibility tends to vitiate all experiments where the number, diagram, etc., to be transferred is chosen by the agent instead of being picked at random from a heap or pack. The

<sup>1</sup> Sur les mouvements musculaires inconscients en rapport avec les images" (*Société de Biologie*, July, 1884).

<sup>2</sup> See Table.

<sup>3</sup> *Apparitions and Thought-Transference*, p. 12.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. especially M. Bergson's case of a boy who when hypnotised succeeded in reading figures from corneal images calculated to have been about  $\frac{1}{160}$ th of an inch high (*Revue Philosophique*, Nov., 1887).

<sup>5</sup> See Table.

<sup>6</sup> For a striking example of the use of unconsciously received impressions, see the account of Jastrow and Nuttall's experiments for testing the alleged psychological influence of magnets, in *Proc. American S.P.R.*, Vol. I.

No.	Described in	Conducted by	Subject of experiment.	State of percipient.	Distance between agent and percipient.	Total number of trials.	Complete successes.	Partial successes.	Chance probability of complete success.
1	<i>Revue Philosophique</i> , Dec., 1884	Prof. Ch. Richet	Playing-cards (suit only)	Normal	Same room	2,927	789	—	732
2	<i>Phantasms of the Living</i> , Vol. I., p. 33	Edmund Gurney, etc.	Do.	Do.	Do.	17,653	4,760	—	4,413
3	<i>Proc. Am. S.P.R.</i> , Series I., pp. 322-49	Mrs. J. F. Brown	Numbers 0—9	Do.	Do.	3,000	584	—	300
4	<i>Proc. S.P.R.</i> , Vol. VI.	Prof. & Mrs. Sidgwick	Numbers 10—90	Hypnotised	Do.	644	117	14 1)	8
5	<i>Proc. S.P.R.</i> , Vol. VIII.	Mrs. Sidgwick	Do.	Do. (usually)	Different rooms	305	36	10 (1)	4
6	<i>Proc. S.P.R.</i> , Vol. III.	Malcolm Guthrie	Pains (2)	Normal	Same room	20	10	7	—
7	<i>Podmore, Apparitions &amp; Thought-Transference</i> , p. 60	Edmund Gurney	Do. (2)	Hypnotised	Same room	24	20	—	—
8	<i>Ibid.</i> , p. 84	Prof. Barrett	Motor impulses (3)	Do.	3 feet increasing to about 30 feet	66	63	—	33
9	<i>Proc. S.P.R.</i> , Vol. IV.	Prof. P. Janet & Dr. Gilbert	Induction of sleep	Normal (but a hypnotic subject)	$\frac{1}{2}$ mile to 1 mile	25	18	4	—
10	<i>Proc. S.P.R.</i> , Vol. XXIX.	Prof. Gilbert Murray	Complex pictures	Normal	See note (4)	505	167	141	—

(1) Only cases where both digits were given correctly but in reverse order are reckoned as partial successes.

(2) The agent or agents were pinched, pricked, etc., in various parts of their bodies, out of view of the percipient. Cases where the pain was localised with exact correctness by the percipient are reckoned as successes.

(3) That the percipient at a given moment should open or not open his hand in accordance with the unspoken will of the agent.

(4) The percipient (Prof. Murray himself) waited outside the room while a subject was named, then came in and told his impressions.

universality and permanence of such habits has been convincingly demonstrated by Dr. C. G. Jung.<sup>1</sup> In particular, certain symbols tend to recur to the minds of almost all persons, in the absence of any conscious motive for selecting one symbol rather than another. Thus, when Dr. von Schrencknotzing in one room draws the serpent-staff of Æsculapius and his subject in the next room simultaneously draws a serpent,<sup>2</sup> or when Herr Schmoll draws a circle supported by a cross and his percipient independently does the same,<sup>3</sup> it is not necessary to invoke telepathy as an explanation; for these two are among the most universal sexual symbols, and it is to be expected that most people will have a strong unconscious preference for them. This disturbing factor may of course be easily eliminated by making chance and not choice determine the subject of each experiment.<sup>4</sup>

As regards the ten series of trials which the writer has selected from among a much larger number for record in tabular form, a full description of the precautions adopted in each case is included in the original accounts. In the majority there was no contact between agent and percipient. In Nos. 7 and 10 contact was allowed in most of the trials, but absence of contact does not seem to have appreciably diminished the proportion of successes. No. 10 has certain features which suggest that some of the successes may have been due to unconscious over-hearing by the percipient; but for various reasons it is not easy to assign them all to this cause.<sup>5</sup> In Nos. 5, 8, and 9 the conditions were such that all explanation by hyperæsthesia of any of the known senses seems decisively ruled out; and few persons, I imagine, will be disposed to attribute the results of these trials to pure chance.<sup>6</sup> Further evidence in favour of telepathy as against hyperæsthesia may be found in the experiments of Mr. Joseph Kirk with various percipients (Podmore, *Apparitions and Thought-Transference*, pp. 131-9); those of Miss Miles and Miss Ramsden (*Proc. S.P.R.*, Vols. XXI. and XXVII.); and those described by Miss Verrall in *Proc. S.P.R.*, Vol. XXVII. In the last-named series agent and percipient occupied separate rooms

<sup>1</sup> *Analytical Psychology*.

<sup>2</sup> *Proc. S.P.R.*, Vol. VII.

<sup>3</sup> *Proc. S.P.R.*, Vol. V.

<sup>4</sup> For a full discussion of the influence of number-habits, etc., see Coover, *Experiments in Psychical Research* (Part IV.).

<sup>5</sup> See Mrs Sidgwick's Discussion in *Proc. S.P.R.*, Vol. XXIX.

<sup>6</sup> It should be mentioned that doubts have been raised in some quarters as to the *bona fides* of Mr. G. A. Smith, who acted as agent in Nos. 4, 5, 7 and 8, on the score of the "revelations" published in 1911 by Mr. Douglas Blackburn concerning certain experiments in which he and Mr. Smith had taken part thirty years earlier. These "revelations" are, however, in the present writer's judgment, very seriously discredited by their failure to agree with the contemporary record made by the S.P.R. investigators and published in *Proceedings S.P.R.* Vol. I., pp. 161-215. See *Journal S.P.R.*, 1911-12, pp. 115 ff.



in the same building; in the others they were separated by distances varying from four hundred yards to several hundred miles. Unfortunately, from the nature of the experiments, the degree of success attained in these cases is not susceptible of statistical expression, and it would perhaps be rash to say positively that it is too great to be accounted for by coincidence and common trains of thought.

But in experiments where the idea to be transferred is selected from among a definite number (the particular selection in each trial being determined by chance, not choice) we know the theoretical likelihood of success in each trial on the assumption that no factor other than chance is operative; hence by calculation it is possible to arrive at the mathematical probability that the aggregate results actually obtained were due to some cause other than chance. And that probability is very high indeed: e.g., for Series 2 in our table, of which the results are not to the non-mathematical mind particularly impressive, it has been calculated by Prof. Edgeworth at .999,999,98.<sup>1</sup> This is not certainty. Certainty in the strictest sense could not by any conceivable series of trials be established: for the possibility of an eccentric run of luck, though it might continually approximate to zero, would never totally vanish—just as it is theoretically possible for me to go on tossing all “heads” and no “tails” to any finite number of trials. But this would seem to be no more than a way of asserting that scientific “truths” are never absolute, a statement which the psychical researcher is not concerned to dispute. The point is that Prof. Edgeworth’s figures represent a degree of probability (in favour of *some* cause other than chance) which would be accepted as an adequate basis for any ordinary induction in the domain of natural science.

The calculus of probabilities has, however, been appealed to not only by those who accept telepathy as a fact in nature but by their adversaries. Mr. John E. Coover, in the formidable monograph which embodies the results of the laboratory experiments set on foot in connection with the recent endowment for Psychical Research at the Leland Stanford Junior University, California, lays much stress—we think an undue stress—on the negative evidence. He reminds us that, for example, the 11,150 guesses of numbers by twenty-seven different percipients collected by the American Society for Psychical Research<sup>2</sup> yielded only 10·17 per cent. successes as against the theoretical probability of 10 per cent. He has himself conducted 10,000 experiments in card-guessing, using some two hundred different persons as agents and percipients: about half of these were “control” experiments,

<sup>1</sup> *Proc. S.P.R.*, Vol. III., p. 190.

<sup>2</sup> *Proc. Am. S.P.R.*, Series I., p. 6 ff.



in which the agent did not look at the card until after the percipient had made his guess. The aggregate results were as follows :

	CARD RIGHT		NUMBERS ONLY RIGHT		
	Total Trials	Actual	Probable	Actual	Probable
" Real " experiments	5,135	153	128	538	513
" Control " experiments	4,865	141	122	488	486

Applying the calculus, Coover concludes, no doubt rightly, that the degree of success attained in the " real " experiments is not too great to be accounted for by chance.

The legitimate inference from such results would seem to be that telepathy, if a genuine faculty, is of sporadic distribution, and is in most persons either entirely absent or present only in a degree too slight for experimental verification. This may be admitted without prejudice to the value of the positive results obtained with individual subjects not only by the English and French investigators, but in some degree, as Dr. Schiller has pointed out in an able review,<sup>1</sup> by Coover himself. In William James's words, " Thought transference may involve a critical point, as physicists call it, which is passed only when certain psychic conditions are realised, and otherwise not reached at all—just as a big conflagration will break out at a certain temperature, below which no conflagration whatever, big or little, can occur."<sup>2</sup> To hold that the positive evidence, relatively scanty as it may be, is invalidated by the negative would be like arguing from the admitted inability of most human beings to move their ears, to a denial that any can, with consequent ascription of all alleged cases of ear-moving to fraud or mal-observation.

If we then assume that in the production of the positive results telepathy has been operative, can we reach any conclusion as to the conditions which help or hinder telepathic transmission? It is obvious that in generalising from the narrow range of instances whose supernormal character seems fairly guaranteed the very greatest caution must be exercised. But this inquiry into conditions has so decisive an importance alike for the practical conduct of future experiments and for the theoretic interpretation of present results—above all, for the light that it may throw on the question of physical mediation versus

<sup>1</sup> *Proc. S.P.R.*, Part LXXVI. Schiller shows that if we take (a) the fourteen most successful series of " real " experiments, and (b) the fourteen most successful series of " control " experiments, the figures in both cases exhibit a great excess over the chance probability; and, further, that success in the latter (as summed by Coover to be pure guesses) has a marked correlation with success in the former. It is at least possible that these curious features point to the actual operation in certain cases not merely of telepathy but of clairvoyance—a possibility which Coover ignores.

<sup>2</sup> *Proc. S.P.R.*, Vol. XII., p. 4.

direct mental action—that even with the somewhat meagre records at our command it would be a mistake to leave it altogether on one side. Those records do in fact present three or four salient features which may be significant of some underlying law or laws. (1) Increase of distance between agent and percipient seems to be a factor inimical but not necessarily fatal to success. The evidence of successful experiments at a distance, though strong enough, in the writer's judgment, to discount any wholesale rejection of telepathy in favour of hyperæsthesia of normal sense, is nevertheless noticeably scanty as compared with the evidence for transmission at close quarters. One might infer that at close quarters telepathy operates more constantly because reinforced by hyperæsthesia. But even this seems an incomplete explanation. In No. 5, for example, hyperæsthesia is apparently already excluded; yet when the distance was further increased the experiments failed almost totally. It is of course possible that this negative result was not directly due to the changed conditions but to weariness or to a preconceived expectation of failure. In the spontaneous cases, as we shall see, distance appears *not* to be a determining factor.

(2) Greater success is achieved with hypnotised persons than with percipients in the normal state. Compare, e.g., No. 3 with No. 4 and No. 6 with No. 7 as regards proportion of successes. Experiments with the percipients of Nos. 4 and 5 in their waking condition yielded *no* result. Again, several French hypnotists have succeeded in putting their patients to sleep at a distance<sup>1</sup>; but with normal persons this experiment fails.

(3) The transferred knowledge usually presents itself to the percipient's consciousness in a sensory form—in the majority of cases, visual. Abstract ideas are difficult, if not impossible, to transfer. Sometimes even with subjects in the waking state, the impression is so vivid as to approximate to hallucination. (Certain experiments in the production of actual hallucination are referred to below.) But it is important to note that the thought may be quite differently imaged by the percipient and by the agent: e.g., the former may repeat mentally the *word* "three" while the latter sees the *figure* printed on a card.

(4) The transferred impression does not necessarily emerge at once, but may remain seemingly latent for several hours and perhaps for much longer periods, just as a post-hypnotic suggestion remains latent until the moment appointed for its execution. That this frequently happens in spontaneous telepathy is almost certain. Ex-

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<sup>1</sup> No. 9 above; also *Proc. S.P.R.*, Vol. V., pp. 222-3; *Revue Philosophique*, Sept., 1888; *Annales des Sciences Psychiques*, Vol. III., pp. 257-67; and cases in Ochorowicz, *La Suggestion Mentale*.

perimental evidence pointing in the same direction may be found in some trials by M. J. Ch. Roux,<sup>1</sup> and in Mr. Kirk's experiments with Miss Prickett.<sup>2</sup>

The last three of these considerations seem to indicate that the telepathic impact is originally felt not by the waking self of the percipient, but unconsciously or subconsciously. This hypothesis is decisively confirmed by the fact that telepathic impressions spontaneously produced so often emerge as hallucinations or dreams, or in automatic writing, crystal vision and the like, sometimes after a preliminary period of incubation. Abramowski, in his recently published work, *Le Subconscient Normal*, attempts to determine more precisely, on the basis of experiments specially devised, the nature of these impressions. He points out that in telepathy we constantly get "general feelings" of the object, images symbolising it, words resembling it, rejection of false suggestions—in fine, all the phenomena of *recollecting*: telepathy "*prend chez le recepateur presque toujours l'aspect d'une rémémoration de l'oublié*"; hence we may suppose that the part of the mind originally affected by the transmission is that which contains submerged memories (called by him the *cœnæsthesia*). He claims to have confirmed this by a series of experiments in the revival by thought-transference of recently submerged memories. Further investigation on these lines is much to be desired. In Abramowski's view the telepathic stimulus first affects certain secretory, motor and osmotic processes; corresponding to this there appears a particular emotional tone in the *cœnæsthesia*, and a particular group of memories is thereby stimulated to revive and pass the threshold of consciousness in the ordinary form of the forgotten-and-now-remembered.<sup>3</sup> In default, however, of further investigation this can hardly be accepted as more than an ingenious guess.

Before we consider the spontaneous evidence attention must be directed to a rare but important type of case which forms a link between the experiments we have been discussing and the spontaneous coincidental hallucinations, viz., hallucination experimentally induced at a distance. The power of projecting a "*doppelgänger*" has been claimed by occultists in many countries and many ages. Mediæval witch-trials abound in such allegations. Well-attested modern examples are not so numerous as one could wish, but their collective force is nevertheless considerable, and if other modes of telepathic action at a distance are admitted there seems to be no good reason for

<sup>1</sup> Podmore, *Apparitions*, p. 125

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 136.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Flournoy's conclusion that, "The psychic processes about to blossom or to fade away in the penumbra of consciousness have more power of radiating to other brains than those which are partly immovable—either in the foreground of attention or in the lowest stratum of the subconsciousness." *Spiritism and Psychology* [Eng. Translation, 1911], p. 212.

rejecting this variety. One of the earliest and best known cases obtained by the English *S.P.R.* is that of Mr. S. H. B.,<sup>1</sup> who on several occasions succeeded by an effort of will in causing a figure of himself to appear to friends at a distance who were not aware of his intention to try the experiment. Once the phantom was seen by two persons simultaneously. Similar experiments have been successfully carried out by the Rev. Clarence Godfrey,<sup>2</sup> Mr. Joseph Kirk,<sup>3</sup> and others. Almost always the hallucination produced was a figure of the agent himself—a circumstance which led Myers and other writers to ascribe these effects to an actual “psychical invasion” by the agent, a “sending,” as the Norse wizards called it. There is, however, an old series of experiments, those of H. M. Wesermann, which if correctly reported show that the telepathic hallucination may take any form determined by the will of the agent.<sup>4</sup> And Dr. Gibotteau found that his patient Berthe, a peasant woman and the daughter of a reputed sorceress, had the power of causing persons at a distance not only to see hallucinations, but to stumble, lose their way, feel causeless panic, etc.<sup>5</sup> This case seems to stand alone at present in the records of serious psychical research; though there are curious apparent parallels in the evidence given at the Cideville libel action (*Thorel v. Tinel*, 1851), described by Andrew Lang in *Proc. S.P.R.*, Vol. XVIII.

## II

While, as we have seen, the scientific study of telepathy is of very recent origin, the belief in certain manifestations which the modern psychical researcher would ascribe to telepathic action is as old as history and as wide as the world. Stories of death-wraiths occur in the primitive literature of most nations. Among the Maoris of New Zealand the faith in the “veridical” character of hallucinations is actually so strong that whenever one of their women sees an apparition of her husband during his absence on an expedition he is assumed to have died and she is at liberty to remarry.<sup>6</sup> We find alleged cases of telepathic clairvoyance in all periods: e.g., we are told of Elisha, that he saw the misconduct of the absent Gehazi;<sup>7</sup> of one Cornelius, that being in Padua he saw Cæsar triumph at Pharsalia;<sup>8</sup> of a certain

<sup>1</sup> *Phantasms of the Living*, Vol. I., pp. 104-9.

<sup>2</sup> Podmore, *Apparitions*, p. 228.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 244.

<sup>4</sup> *Der Magnetismus und die allgemeine Weltsprache*, 1822.

<sup>5</sup> See Gibotteau's very remarkable paper in *Annales des Sciences Psychiques*, Vol. II.

<sup>6</sup> Lang, *Cock Lane and Common Sense*, p. 193.

<sup>7</sup> 2 Kings, 5, 26

<sup>8</sup> *Dio Cassius*, lib. lxxvii.

Greek, that he fell frequently into trances in which he had vision of distant contemporary events;<sup>1</sup> of a maniac in Gascony, that he saw Coligny murdered in Paris;<sup>2</sup> of a Rev. Cameron, that he saw in Kintyre the flight of the Whigs at Bothwell Brigg at the precise moment it occurred.<sup>3</sup> Again, in Patrick Walker's *Biographia Presbyteriana* there are several very remarkable accounts of collective hallucinations in which telepathy would certainly seem to have been at work. Among historical cases of death-wraiths one may cite the rather suspiciously complete visual, auditory, and tactile hallucination of Dugall Stewart and two other gentlemen which is reported by Buchanan to have coincided with the murder of Darnley;<sup>4</sup> the supposed apparition of Claverhouse at the moment of his death to his friend Lord Balcarras;<sup>5</sup> and the much better authenticated story of the friend who in pursuance of a compact appeared at the time of his death to Lord Brougham, catching that gentleman in the act of taking a hot bath. The theory which attributes such occurrences to telepathy is at least as old as Lavaterus, is implicit indeed in the Norse notion of sendings; but it was not until the nineteenth century that it began to attract the serious attention of the learned. Hibbert, in his *Philosophy of Apparitions* (1825), championed, on a very narrow basis of evidence, the "common-sense" view which puts down the coincidences to chance. In the middle of the century the telepathic explanation was revived by Mayo. But the earliest really adequate presentation of the evidence is to be found in Edmund Gurney's *Phantasms of the Living* (1886), with its careful reports of 702 cases, including some 350 first-hand narratives. Since then a good many additional cases have appeared in the *Proceedings* and *Journal* of the *Society for Psychical Research*, the *Annales des Sciences Psychiques*, and other publications.

The general character of the modern evidence for spontaneous telepathy is well known; but it may be worth while to enumerate here the principal types. Podmore's classification has been followed in the main; and the examples quoted are all to be found in his admirable book, *Apparitions and Thought-Transference*.

(1) *Spontaneous transference in the waking state* of (a) sensations, ideas, and mental pictures, (b) emotions and impulses to action. Thus, (a) a Mrs. Barber thought of telling her two-year-old daughter that she had seen a big black dog with curly hair in a shop that morning; two minutes later the child announced that her mother had seen a big dog with funny hair in a shop. This type, evidentially one of the weakest, has some interest on account of the close parallel with

<sup>1</sup> Pliny, *Natural History*, VII., 52, 174.

<sup>2</sup> Crespet, *De la Hayne de Diable*.

<sup>3</sup> Wodrow, I., 44.

<sup>4</sup> Quoted in Sharpe's *History of Witchcraft in Scotland*, p. 142.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 170.



experimental results. (b) A Mrs. Hadselle is spending the evening with some friends when she feels an unaccountable desire to return home, accompanied by vague fear: she yields to it, at some inconvenience, and arrives just in time to rescue her son from accidental suffocation.

(2) *Telepathic message received in a dream.* Thus, Mr. E. W. Hamilton, C.B., dreams that his brother, who has been absent in Australia for many years, and of whom he has had no recent news, has returned home and has one of his wrists red and distorted; he makes a note of the dream in his diary the next day; later he learns that his brother was on his way home at the time of the dream and suffering from a very bad abscess over one wrist-joint.

(3) *Hallucinations*, auditory or visual, corresponding (a) with the death of the person represented (the so-called death-wraith), (b) with other facts unknown to the percipient. Of these two types, the former has in the evidence so far collected an overwhelming preponderance. Thus, (a) Dr. Carat in Paris sees one evening his mother's face looking at him with a troubled expression; the experience is a unique one, and he relates it to a friend at breakfast the next morning; he believes his mother—who is at Dunkirk—to be in good health, but learns afterwards that at the time of his vision she was suffering from inflammation of the lungs, to which she succumbed a few hours later. (b) Frances Reddall, maid-servant to Mrs. Pole-Carew, while nursing a girl lying ill with typhoid fever has a detailed auditory and visual hallucination (the only one in her life) of the patient's mother, whom she has never seen. She communicates a full account of the experience to her mistress within a few hours of its occurrence. Two days later the mother arrives in the flesh, and all the trivial details observed, even to a hole frayed in the front of the flannel petticoat of the apparition, prove to have been correct.

(4) *Cases of correspondence between (a) two dreams or (b) a dream and a hallucination or (c) two hallucinations.* There may or may not be a further correspondence with some external event. Thus, on the night when Prof. Richet's psychological laboratory in Paris was burnt, two of his intimate friends dreamed of fire; and a hypnotised subject at Havre, told to visit Prof. Richet and see what he was doing, had a hallucination of fire. This case, of course, derives what strength it has chiefly from the triple coincidence with a real event; and in general types (a) and (b) have little evidential value in the absence of such coincidence. But some collective or concordant hallucinations—type (c)—as when husband and wife simultaneously wake to see an unexplained hallucinatory figure in their bedroom, afford tolerably strong evidence of telepathy between the percipients.

(5) *Information received through automatic writing, crystal-vision, table-tilting, etc.* Most of the cases under this head are of ambiguous



interpretation, but some examples which should almost certainly be referred to telepathy from the living are cited in § 3 below.

This evidence stands in several respects on a different footing from the experimental results. In the first place, save for a very few "reciprocal" cases,<sup>1</sup> the presumed agent can never be shown to have had any consciousness of the part played by him in producing the effect, whereas in experiment the agent's close concentration is apparently necessary. Secondly, in spontaneous cases the impact frequently makes itself felt across very great distances; whereas in experiment increase of distance appears to exercise an unfavourable influence. Thirdly, as regards the nature of the effects produced, few of the spontaneous cases have any adequate experimental parallel. Hence some writers<sup>2</sup> have gone so far as to doubt the justice of ascribing the experimental and the spontaneous effects to the same cause. And it is certainly quite possible that further study of the latter may lead us (as it led Frederick Myers) to modify our notion of telepathy, or even to abandon it altogether in favour of some wider conception. But, while we are by no means in a position to dogmatise, we can fairly say that the assumption of a common cause has for the first time brought such phenomena as the "death-wraith" within the domain of the intelligible, and has so far justified itself as a working hypothesis.

Even apart, however, from these doubts, we must recognise the inferior cogency of the evidence for telepathy afforded by spontaneous happenings. If alternative explanations by hyperæsthesia are here in almost all cases excluded, yet on the one hand the possibility of pure coincidence cannot be discounted with the same confidence as in the best experimental series, and on the other the risk of error in the records is far greater. The reports come not from trained investigators, but from chance witnesses; and it is certain that the evidence of the average witness on any matter, however honest his intention to tell the whole truth and nothing but the truth, is liable to an insidious distortion which he is himself powerless to correct, of whose nature and extent indeed psychologists have only begun to be aware. Such unconscious falsification is most plainly seen at work if we compare second-hand with first-hand accounts: with the lessening of personal responsibility the desire to prove a theory or tell a good story governs in most people almost unchecked, and will determine such illusions of memory as to render second-hand evidence very nearly worthless. "At that very moment my friend passed away" is a phrase which meets us again and again in tales of death-wraiths; but it is only in a

<sup>1</sup> See *Phantasms of the Living*, Vol. II., p. 167; Podmore, *op. cit.*, p. 298.

<sup>2</sup> E.g. Tuckett, *Evidence for the Supernatural*. And of course those who believe in "astral bodies" and kindred hypotheses raise the same difficulties, as regards the most important class of spontaneous cases, viz., apparitions of the living or of persons just dead.

small proportion of these stories that the alleged coincidence can be established by contemporary evidence. Even with first-hand narratives, in the absence of any record of the facts made at the time of their occurrence, a very large allowance must undoubtedly be conceded to the emotional bias of the narrator. An ingenious French writer, M. Vaschide,<sup>1</sup> found that out of more than 1,000 "hallucinations" occurring among his own acquaintances and alleged by them to be telepathic in character, 96 per cent did not in fact correspond to any objective reality whatever. It should, however, be borne in mind that under the term "hallucination" he includes many sorts of vague imagings and misgivings, experiences which are far more easily distorted in memory than a definite and impressive apparition; and that the stories in his collection had not been subjected to any such preliminary process of sifting as Gurney applied to the evidence dealt with in *Phantasms of the Living*. If we exclude from consideration all narratives which are not (a) first-hand; (b) obtained from witnesses of good education and known integrity; (c) written within a year of the occurrence; and (d) confirmed by some independent evidence both of the actuality of the experience and of its coincidental character we are left with a number of cases, small indeed in proportion to the whole mass, yet not to be explained away unless through a long series of improbable assumptions. It would be necessary, in Gurney's words, to suppose.

"that some people have a way of dating their letters in indifference to the calendar, or making entries in their diaries on the wrong page and never discovering the error; and that whole families have been struck by the collective hallucination that one of their members had made a particular remark, the substance of which had never so much as entered that member's head; and that it is a recognised custom to write mournful letters about bereavements which have never occurred; and that when A describes to a friend how he has distinctly heard the voice of B, it is not infrequently by a slip of the tongue for C; and that when D says he is not subject to hallucinations of vision, it is through momentary forgetfulness of the fact that he has a spectral illusion once a week; and that when a wife interrupts her husband's slumbers with words of distress and alarm, it is only her fun, or a sudden morbid craving for undeserved sympathy; or that when people assert that they were in sound health, in good spirits, and wide awake at a particular time which they had occasion to note, it is a safe conclusion that they were having a nightmare, or were the prostrate victims of nervous hypochondria."

Taken singly, every one of these improbabilities remains a possibility; collectively, they at least suggest that the theory of unconscious fabrication is capable of being overworked.

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<sup>1</sup> *Les Hallucinations Télépathiques*. (Paris, 1908.)

But the hostile critic, if forced to abandon the comfortable doctrine of wholesale mis-statement, is at liberty to fall back upon the simple position that such coincidences as do actually occur are attributable to the operation of chance; and from this fastness of scepticism, so long as he himself *feels* it to be tenable, it is hardly possible to dislodge him. As regards the experimental evidence an appeal to the calculus of probabilities furnished adequate grounds—many people would say, conclusive proof—for the belief that some factor other than chance was present. But in practically all the cases we are dealing with now, except for one important group, such an appeal is ruled out, the likelihood of chance coincidence not being susceptible of mathematical statement. The exception concerns cases of type 3 (a) above, hallucinations coinciding with the death of the person seen. The “census” of hallucinations, undertaken by the *S.P.R.* in 1890-92, furnished the basis for an attempt to obtain mathematical proof of a causal nexus between apparitions and death. The argument is, briefly, as follows.<sup>1</sup> The death-rate in England and Wales was, for the decade preceding the *S.P.R.* census, 19·15 per 1,000 per annum. Hence, the average person has 19·15 chances in 1,000  $\times$  365, or about 1 in 19,000, of dying on the particular day on which his apparition is seen and recognised. Hence, for every recognised apparition which occurs within twelve hours before or after the death of the person seen, we should expect to find 18,999 similar apparitions not so occurring. Now the *S.P.R.* by means of a *questionnaire* applied to 17,000 people obtained first-hand reports of 322 recognised apparitions of the living. Of these 322 hallucinations they found, after full investigation and allowance for certain sources of error, that thirty-two, or about one in ten, had happened, without any apparent cause such as anxiety, within twelve hours of the death of the person seen. If this is so, then either there exists some causal connection between deaths and apparitions, or an enormous number of non-coincidental visions ( $32 \times 18,999 =$  approx. 600,000) were seen by these 17,000 people, of which less than 300 were remembered. This latter alternative was actually embraced by Herr Edmund Parish in his work *Über die Trugwahrnehmung* (Leipzig, 1894;<sup>2</sup> but it conducs to surprising conclusions. For since the 600,000 experiences are distributed over a period of about thirty years, they must occur at the average rate of 769 per fortnight. But only twelve such experiences are reported as falling within the last fortnight before the percipient filled up the Society’s census paper. It follows that of recognised hallucinations of the living approximately 98·5 per cent. are forgotten within a fortnight of their occurrence!

<sup>1</sup> The full report of the *S.P.R.* Committee, in *Proceedings*, Vol. X., will repay careful study.

<sup>2</sup> English translation in *Contemporary Science Series*, under the name of *Hallucinations and Illusions*.

That supposition may be dismissed as fantastic ; but that a high proportion of non-coincidental hallucinations would *in process of time* be forgotten was of course recognised by the committee which conducted the census. On the basis of a numerical comparison between the recent and the remote cases they decided that the total number of visual hallucinations recorded should be multiplied approximately by four ; leaving in the revised estimate a proportion of coincidences amounting to about one in forty. Precautions were also as far as possible taken against another disturbing factor, viz., preferential selection by the collectors of persons known to have had coincidental experiences. On the whole, the committee's conclusion that death coincidences are due to some other cause than chance seems a fair inference from the statements presented to them. At the same time, their inquiry can hardly be regarded as establishing beyond cavil the theory of telepathic hallucination. For that, not only a more thorough study of the possible sources of error, but a much wider field of evidence would be required. As Andrew Lang observed : " Nothing can *demonstrate* that coincidences between deaths and hallucinations occur more frequently than by the doctrine of chance they ought to do, except a census of the whole population." <sup>1</sup>

### III

The reader of this essay will probably have noticed that by far the greater part of the material reviewed in it was obtained before the beginning of the present century. Since 1900 two or three important additions have been made to the direct experimental evidence,<sup>2</sup> and a certain number of new spontaneous cases have been recorded ; but, speaking generally, it is true that the attention of psychical researchers has for the past twenty years been directed elsewhere : in England, principally to the evidence for survival obtained through automatic writing ; on the continent, largely to " materialisations " and to the obscure range of phenomena loosely described as " clairvoyant." The special problem of telepathy seems to have been temporarily shelved, leaving the limits of action of this singular force almost wholly undetermined and the proof of its operation less conclusive than one could wish. It is not, however, possible, for our present knowledge, to study any one branch of Psychical Research entirely in isolation from the rest. Apart from the types of evidence exemplified above—

<sup>1</sup> *Encyclopædia Britannica*, Ed. X., art. " Psychical Research."

<sup>2</sup> The S.P.R. *Journal*, Feb., 1915, made an urgent appeal for further experiment.

the evidence on the basis of which the orthodox conception of telepathy was framed—there exists a further mass of somewhat heterogeneous material which, if accepted at its face value, points to the operation *either* of telepathy *or* of some other force or forces not recognised by science. It is no part of the writer's purpose to discuss these alternative interpretations. But it must be pointed out that *if* the telepathic explanation be preferred here to the assumption of some other supernormal agency, (1) the general case for telepathy as against fraud or misdescription receives an important access of strength, (2) the orthodox conception of telepathy will require modification in more than one particular. The present survey cannot, therefore, be brought to a close without brief reference to some of these ambiguous cases.

The word "clairvoyance" has been used with several meanings, distinct but not always distinguished by the users. It may signify a supernormal faculty of obtaining *without any apparent co-operation of other minds* information which exists (a) in the minds of other persons present; or (b) only in the minds of distant persons; or (c) in no living human mind. Clairvoyance in the last of these senses (called by Myers telæsthesia) is by definition a faculty independent of telepathy; and believers in the actuality of telæsthesia commonly regard clairvoyance in the other two senses as being likewise in some degree an independent faculty. On the other hand, those who, like the writer, consider telæsthesia as not proven and telepathy as fairly well established, are naturally disposed to include all well-evidenced intermediate phenomena as far as possible under the head of the latter. Now there are in fact a number of striking cases where, in Podmore's words,

"the transmitted idea seems to reach the mind of the percipient no longer as the meagre result of a serious crisis or of a direct and often prolonged effort of attention on the part of the agent, but spontaneously, with great fulness of detail, and often with remarkable ease and rapidity, as the outcome of a special receptivity on the part of the percipient."

Occurrences of this sort have been observed almost exclusively in association either with trance conditions (spontaneous or hypnotically induced) or with some form of deliberately cultivated automatism.<sup>1</sup>

Two very important early instances of seemingly clairvoyant faculty manifesting itself through "autosscopes" are the Newnham case,<sup>2</sup> where the automatist's hand repeatedly wrote with a planchette clear and appropriate replies to questions which she had neither heard

<sup>1</sup> Some coincidental hallucinations perceived in the normal state do, however, present features suggestive of clairvoyant vision. See, for instance, *Proc. S.P.R.*, Vol. VI., pp. 33-4, and Canon Warburton's case, *Phantasms*, I., p. 338.

<sup>2</sup> *Proc. S.P.R.*, Vol. III., pp. 8-23. Cf. Vol. IX., pp. 61-4.



nor seen; and the celebrated "two-table" experiments of Prof. Richet.<sup>1</sup> In the latter the percipients sat with their hands resting on one table; a printed alphabet was placed on another, out of their range of vision, and M. Richet kept his pen moving steadily from letter to letter. Whenever the first table tilted it caused a bell to ring, and the letter to which M. Richet's pen at that moment pointed was noted down. In these conditions words and sentences were spelled out; and it was further found that the word to be spelled could be determined with more or less accuracy by the unspoken will of another operator who stood apart from both tables. A similar and even more impressive phenomenon is the picking out by blindfolded sitters of cardboard letters scattered indiscriminately over a table and covered with a thick sheet of glass, in such a manner as to spell rapid continuous messages.<sup>2</sup> If these results are to be attributed to telepathy from the persons looking at the letters (clairvoyance in sense (a)), not only do they show the faculty working with a speed and precision otherwise unexampled, but they furnish the crowning proof that it is, for agent and percipient alike, an activity of the Unconscious. The records of the trance utterances of Mrs. Piper include many cases of "thought-reading" of a more familiar kind, i.e., the production of specific pieces of information which seem to have been supernormally derived from the conscious or unconscious minds of her sitters: the "Uncle Jerry" case, described by Sir Oliver Lodge in *Proc. S.P.R.*, Vol. VI., may be cited as an especially clear example.

For the spontaneous derivation of knowledge from *distant* minds (clairvoyance in the second sense) there is also a good deal of evidence, into which it is not possible to enter in detail here. Results pointing in this direction have been obtained with hypnotic subjects;<sup>3</sup> through the instrumentality of the crystal;<sup>4</sup> through automatic writing;<sup>5</sup> and with the mediation (whether indispensable or not we are hardly as yet in a position to say) of objects belonging to the distant person (the so-called "psychometry").<sup>6</sup> By far the most striking, however, of well-authenticated recent cases which might be included under this head have occurred in *soi-disant* communications from the dead, and are held by many persons to afford evidence not of telepathy, but of

<sup>1</sup> *Revue Phil.*, Dec., 1884; discussion by Gurney in *Proc. S.P.R.*, Vol. II., pp. 239-64.

<sup>2</sup> Described by Sir William Barrett in *Proc. S.P.R.*, Part lxxvi., and by the "medium" herself in *Voices from the Void*; and more than once witnessed by the present writer under conditions which, in his judgment, precluded any normal explanation.

<sup>3</sup> See the papers by Mrs. Sidgwick and Dr. Backman in *Proc. S.P.R.*, Vol. VII.

<sup>4</sup> See the cases quoted by Myers in *Proc. S.P.R.*, Vol. VIII., Part xxiii.

<sup>5</sup> See, e.g., the "Mackenzie" case, quoted by Barrett, *Proc. S.P.R.*, Part lxxvi.

<sup>6</sup> See Warcollier in *Annales des Sciences Psychiques*, July, 1911; Osty, *Lucidité et Intuition*; Travers Smith, *Voices from the Void*.



survival. In the discussion still raging round the "cross-correspondences" which now for a number of years have occupied first place in the S.P.R. *Proceedings*, the hypothesis of telepathy (and telepathy, too, of an otherwise rare or even unexampled type)<sup>1</sup> has surprisingly become the recognised refuge of the cautious or sceptical critic. The moral which the writer is disposed to draw from the whole of that confused and hitherto indecisive controversy is that little progress is likely to be made with Psychical Research until the nature and limitations of the telepathic faculty have been determined with some degree of precision by means of further experimental study.

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<sup>1</sup> This point is very clearly made in the Rev. M. A. Bayfield's paper in *Proc. S.P.R.*, Vol. XXVII.

## FREEWILL IN ITS BEARING ON IMMORTALITY

By THE REV. A. R. WHATELY, D.D.

**F**AR too little importance has been attached to the significance of freewill in the various arguments adduced for immortality. Such at least is the opinion of the writer of this article, and an attempt will here be made, as far as our limits permit, to make it good.

What do we mean by freewill? First, what do we not mean?

(1) Not the mere negative Indeterminism of William James, as set forth in his celebrated essay *The Will to Believe*. That not all the actions of men are previsible, or absolutely fixed beforehand in their antecedent conditions, is, I hold, perfectly true, but only one side of the truth, and certainly quite incapable of bearing the burden of our argument. In other words, freedom is not chance.

(2) Nor yet again the opposite and very favourite modern theory miscalled Self-determination. It is little to maintain that some of our actions proceed truly from ourselves, and are not the automatic results of our environment and physical condition, if the very activities of our souls are all as truly involved in their constitution at the beginning, as, according to the extreme Determinist, they are involved in the very foundations of the universe. In other words, we have here no use for any theory of automatism, whether material or spiritual, universal, or individual. True determination of ourselves—such as many of us believe to be essential to the very idea of morality—presupposes indeterminism: that is, real issues to be decided, and therefore not pre-decided.

(3) We must also make clear our position with reference to a widespread confusion of thought which prevailed throughout the great theological controversy on fate and freewill which emerged in different forms during the history of the Christian Church. Freedom, in these controversies, was generally regarded as the power to do good, and with this, of course, were associated good words and thoughts. Whereas freedom, in its moral aspect, is the power rather to *be* good: for in all particular moral duties possibility, not merely physical but moral, is presupposed. It is when we have regard to the *general* moral attitude of the person, the general bent of the will, that the true bearing of the question of freewill—and with it the answer—appears. Freedom—so far as it is a power—is the power of the higher

centres—if we may express it in terms of the brain—over the lower.<sup>1</sup> But behind this lies the *choice* of the upward path, and, when this choice is made, some measure of power to carry it out in particulars is already present. It is only in the sphere of self-discipline and self-mastery, especially as directed to moral ends, that the nerve of human freedom is to be traced. Here is the conflict, with its victories and its failures. Established virtue is above it, physical effort is below.

We are now in a position to define freewill, at least in the aspect that here concerns us, and this definition is corrective of the three inadequate views thus briefly set forth. Freedom is *power over oneself*. It is the control and organisation of the lower levels of our selfhood by the higher, and ultimately by the emancipated soul in its integrity, the Stoic Wise Man, the Christian Saint.

As against the first view, it is certainly not chance, for it is rational and deliberate. As against the second, let us note that if all changes in the soul and all its new departures are predetermined, they cannot be determined afterwards: if for us, then not by us; our own intentions and efforts are merely antecedents, not causes.

Freedom, as Bergson justly maintains, is primarily the action of the *whole* man. But it has degrees: it may be relative or absolute; in any case it is a fact *per se*, irreducible to any other conception whatever.

But further. It does not follow the leading of mere impulse: it belongs to rational beings as such, though the use of it may often be unreasonable. Yet it is not merely identical with rationality. True freedom is the very negation of automatism, whether the machine be worked by feelings or by ideas. There must be real choice: real initiation: and this implies self-direction, self-control, self turning inward upon itself. And this, conversely, cannot be predetermined, for it means that we are not constructed unchangeable.

Canon Rashdall, in his defence of "Self-determination" takes some note of this objection, but thinks that it rests on a confusion between "character" and "some ultimate psychological or metaphysical ground or basis or source of 'character,' true or false."<sup>2</sup> But we must demur to this distinction, as utterly unreal and scholastic. It savours of the "substance and accidents" theory which afforded so neat an explanation of transubstantiation. A man's character—certainly in its deepest aspects—is himself. If it changes, then so far forth *he* changes. Of course there is always the thread of an identical

<sup>1</sup> The subject of dependence upon God is not within the scope of this article, but, to avoid misunderstanding, one simple proposition may here be made. Freedom of the will does not mean independence, but the choice of our ideal and of that on which to depend, and the maintenance of this choice point by point afterwards.

<sup>2</sup> *The Theory of Good and Evil*, Vol. II., ch. iii., p. 303.

personality. But this itself is not isolated from the moral and spiritual qualities : it expands or contracts as these thrive or decay.

The tendency of this form of Determinism is to make character as little as possible a part of the man himself, and to leave us to imagine I know not what occult soul-substance from which actions emanate but upon which they do not return.

But before we proceed to apply our definition of freewill to the question of immortality, we must complete it. If it is really to mean anything as an aspect of personality we must recognise it on lower levels than the pathways of high moral endeavour. It must shade down towards—and even right into—the functions of animal life.

The lowest level is that of the actual bodily functions that are under our control ; for the control of these, such as we all have—even apart from that higher dominance of matter that we ordinarily call self-control—is relative freedom. I shall touch on this point in a moment, when we come to consider briefly the scientific aspect.

Above these functions, reflex or instinctive, is the level of deliberate action with a view to proximate ends. (This, let me remark by the way, is only a rough gradation. The force of the argument does not depend upon its exactitude.)

Thirdly, there is the level of higher intelligence and self-government, that seeks further ends, if it be only the provision for one's own declining years.

Fourthly, there is the supreme self-organisation of the man who *uses* from above even that in him that is highest for most : whose character is the raw material of the higher self-culture : whose natural virtues are the servants of his ideals ; the man who believes in the permanence of spiritual values, and lives—whatever his natural imperfections—in generally consistent conformity with that belief. This we have made the basis of our conception of freedom ; and it is not difficult to see that, once we have done so, freedom extends in diminishing degrees down to the lowest level.

Let us consider this for a minute. Beginning from the highest, and last-mentioned, let us designate these levels by the letters A, B, C, D. A represents the nearest approach we can conceive to absolute freedom. It governs D, not only directly, but through B and C, and uses and transforms even those characteristics, moral and mental, of B and C in which B is superior to C and C to D.

Now, if we do believe at all in the reality of that spiritual sphere which, even though perhaps he may imperfectly realise it, is for the man at the A level the presupposition of his whole life-attitude, we cannot possibly regard B and C as reducible to D, and all three merely mechanical. As B is to A, so is C to B and D to C. Relatively to the level below, each level above the lowest is pure freedom. Take the man at the B level, the man of more or less selfish forethought.

Why is he not fully free ? He is very largely master of the impulses of his body. If we refuse to allow that he has found the highest freedom, it is not because freedom as such is a delusion—because matter and energy are the whole of reality—but because he possesses so imperfectly what we see him to possess in some degree. We admit the principle of freedom in the fact of our commenting upon his bondage to low ideals.

And so our definition of freedom as power over oneself covers the whole range of conscious activity, but appears as a matter of degree. And the conclusion is surely inevitable. The intermediate level controls the lower, and in so doing is—in the greatest personalities—controlled by the higher. *This shows that the former process, even when not controlled from above, is not absolutely predetermined.* Even the C level can only be explained as mechanical, by first restricting our study of it to its mechanical aspects. But this brings us to the scientific question.

It would certainly seem that the confident assumption that science is in a fair way to prove the complete dependence of mind upon brain is, to say the very least, premature. Even if this result could so far as concerns science, be attained, it would be open to anti-materialists to urge that science had thus only revealed more clearly the essential limitations of its standpoint : that such a result, though true relatively to that standpoint, is meaningless in the larger contexts of thought. But even science itself seems to be marking out its own frontier, from its own side of the frontier, in this question of mind and brain. And our justification for considering that question here lies in this : that Will, as the principle of control and organisation, is for us the key to its solution.

Scientists in general would not now, I suppose, seriously dispute the proposition that the brain is, at least in one aspect, the organ of the mind. In this connection we have an elaborate "History and Defence of Animism"—to quote the sub-title of Dr. McDougall's *Body and Mind*. On grounds of Psychology and of physical science he shows (in the words of his own summary) "that the mechanical principles are not adequate to the explanation of biological phenomena," and likewise that "a strict parallelism between our psychical processes and the physical processes of our brains does not as a matter of empirical fact obtain ; . . . that facts of our conscious life, especially *the fact of psychical individuality, the fact of the unity of the consciousness* correlated with the physical manifold of brain-processes, cannot be rendered intelligible (as admitted by leading Parallelists) without the postulation of some ground of unity other than the brain or material organism."<sup>1</sup> The words I have italicised indicate the link with our

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<sup>1</sup> Page 356.



present subject. The writer finds that the purposive organisation of the cerebral processes cannot be explained merely in terms of those processes. "The facts, then, point strongly to the view that conation or psychical effort really intervenes in the course of the physical processes of the brain, and that it plays an essential role in the building up of the organisation of the brain. And it may be plausibly maintained that all other modes of consciousness serve but to guide or determine the incidence of conation, the primary and most fundamental form of psychical activity."<sup>1</sup>

The reason why the Will is so elusive to science is not difficult to perceive. It is of the essence of scientific process to investigate law and to reduce to classification. Now free action is, as such, superior to the inevitableness of law, and the individual, as such, who is the bearer of freewill, transcends classification. Disturbing factors are to be eliminated, and the personal equation is essentially a disturbing factor. No study of nature which starts on the basis of mechanism can—however valuable and fruitful in itself—discover that all is mechanism.

It is with diffidence that I make any pronouncement on this point; and yet, beneath any possible inaccuracy, I am convinced that the main contention is sound, for, after all, the justification and the glory of science rests in its verifications, and even the non-scientist knows that there are regions of ideas bordering on science, yet where scientific verification is in the nature of the case impossible.

The "soul," or the "self," is not and cannot be a term of science, neither can the Will—which is the main subject of this article—so far as science studies nature in its character as determinate.

There is, however, a different way of regarding scientific method: that, for instance, of Dr. Haldane, and Dr. McDougall himself. If they are right—if biology, for instance, will not fit into mechanical categories—then we must regard scientific method as expanding according as its subject-matter approaches the larger and higher realities. But it all amounts to the same for the purpose of our argument. Scientific method surely must be regarded by all who believe in a spiritual universe—either as adapted only to a limited aspect of reality or else as progressively enlarged and transformed according as its data rise in the scale of being.

But science, it would seem, even when adhering to rigid methods, can call our attention to an unassimilable and refractory residuum, which is so sharply distinguishable from the facts it can explain that even its progressive success in explaining these facts raises no presumption, but rather the reverse, that it will ever assimilate the residuum. And this, as it appears to me, is the position with regard to the unity

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<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 279.



of consciousness : to conation : to all that is involved in the conception of personality.

Here, undoubtedly, we find ourselves on the frontier of philosophy, which alone can argue positively that this residuum is really and necessarily such, and can attach to it an intelligible meaning.

But there remains an important question while we are dealing with the scientific evidence. Although, in respect of volition and the higher intellectual capacities, the soul appears as superior to the body, yet in respect of the sensory content of consciousness, it appears dependent upon the body. Dr. McDougall suggests that after death it "might find conditions that would stimulate it to imageless thought (possibly conditions of direct or telepathic communication with other minds), or might find under other conditions (possibly in association with some other bodily organism) a sphere for the application and actualisation of the capacities developed in it during its life in the body."<sup>1</sup>

The alternative of "imageless thought" is one that raises a wide question, that of the fundamental relations of thought to sense and imagination. As we are here primarily concerned with the Will, there is no need or space to enter upon it. The second alternative is the one that ought to arrest our attention. Occultism claims to have discovered spheres of material existence, of which the vibrations are outside the range of our senses on this earth-plane. The acceptance of this doctrine will depend very largely on our several pre-dispositions. For myself, I can only regard it as such that the burden of proof lies rather with those that deny than with those that affirm it.

Let us consider how the matter stands *a priori*. We must not surrender our minds too completely to the leading of the term "soul," however fascinated some of us may be by Dr. McDougall's vindication of its superiority to material conditions. It suggests, like the general term "spirit," a sharp antithesis with matter as such which is not present in our conception of personality in its concrete conditions. We have a more workable idea of "personality" than of "soul," so far as we can make the distinction at all. For the former leaves open the inclusion of corporeity in its meaning; the latter is defined in contradistinction to corporeity. As to personality, we understand what we mean when we speak of its integrity, and express a belief that that integrity will be maintained in the future life. We have transcended the qualified hope, "*Non omnis moriar*," unhampered by the premature inclusion of the physical vehicle in our terms. This will remain a corollary, however closely following. In any case the person is to us a term more ultimate than will, feeling, desire, or thought—more ultimate because more concrete. And when, on the other hand, we consider how little we know of matter, and how indefinitely wide are its

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 372.

possibilities, we shall be the more ready to let the problem of corporeal existence take care of itself. If imageless thought, or any other abatement of what we demand *prima facie* for our psychical integrity, proves, upon consideration, to be adequate to that demand, so let it be. But if not, surely it is better to assume that matter is not restricted to one plane, and narrowly circumscribed in the range of its vibrations, than to take abstract terms—such as thought or will—rather than the more concrete, as the units of discourse. Between the conception of spirit as following matter, and that of spirit as separable from matter, there is at least one other: that of matter as following spirit.

James' theory of Self as shading off into all its physical context, even our clothes and our possessions, gives us a hint that is relevant to our present purpose. "Resemblance," he says, "among the parts of a continuum of feelings (especially bodily feelings) experienced along with things widely different in all other regards, thus constitutes the real and verifiable 'personal identity' which we feel."<sup>1</sup> The negative side of his teaching on this subject is not at all accepted in this article, but we may learn from him to work out from an idea of self based on experience, *extensive*—one might say—not merely intensive, physical as well as spiritual; and then if material embodiment, of some sort or another, really seems necessary to preserve the concreteness of the idea, we certainly shall not suspend our conclusions till the completion of the evidence for the perisprit or astral body.

The special application of these remarks to the Will is not far to seek. We define it as self having power over—or acting upon—self. It is thus an *aspect*, not properly a part or function, of the entire personality. Schopenhauer has familiarised us with the idea of pure will, and others since have regarded will as the nerve of personality. But the will is, after all, only the fact of willing, and it is the person that wills. And if the will is free, the person is free: there is no meaning in the freedom of a bare will.

When we affirm that the will itself is free we seem to be influenced by the following consideration. The simplest proposition is that *we* are free, or, if a question, "Are *we* free?" But then we discover a difficulty. Freedom suggests the absence of prison-bars, of fetters, of human tyranny, of confining circumstances, and so forth; and its absence means that we are actually prevented from doing *what we will*. But the whole question concerns the meaning of will, and presupposes some scope at least for its exercise, be it only the bare initiation of movements instantly thwarted. So we are led on to say: "Yes, but this is not what we want to know; this is not the philosophical question at all; we are aware that persons may be, relatively speaking, free or not free, but we want to know whether, granted some scope—

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<sup>1</sup> *Principles of Psychology*, Vol. I., p. 336.

or at least the belief that there is some scope—the apparent choice and initiation of action is really exercised by the person in question, in virtue of an autonomy that he possesses independently of nature and even of God. In other words, is the will *in itself and as such* free? The problem may be stated in a hundred different ways, but this may suffice to show how we are led to talk about the freedom of the will rather than of the person: because a free person suggests a liberated slave, or a boy out of school, or a man whose private means raise him above many limiting necessities.

And yet we rightly speak of the person. But in what sense can he be otherwise than free? We are not now concerned with the different theories that deny or explain away freewill, with Determinism, materialistic or idealistic, monistic or pluralistic. There is a sense in which, from the point of view taken in this article, one person may be, on the higher levels, a slave, and another enjoy a large freedom, with all sorts of gradations between. If, then, freewill is real, and yet is variously limited in different persons, what is the principle of limitation? It is certainly something inward and belonging to the soul itself, yet again it is something the soul may resist, and by the very fact that it does limit its freedom, is also in some sense alien and external.

We return to our definition, "power over oneself." That our personality has different levels, between which there can be interaction, is certainly the *prima facie* testimony of experience. Croce maintains that this is a delusion, and that St. Paul, for instance, in his account of his spiritual conflicts (Rom. vii, 15-25), mistakes the alternation of states for the co-presence of two warring tendencies. Victory over self, self-control, and all such phrases, would, on this principle, be metaphors, and very strange metaphors, too, to describe mere change and oscillation.

But it is not necessary here to consider this view of personality in the philosophical system to which it belongs. A direct appeal to self-consciousness—the final court of appeal in all that relates to the soul—must suffice. We are unquestionably conscious not simply of changing moods and unstable equilibrium of impulses, but of resistance, not outward but inward, when we are endeavouring to live in harmony with our highest ideals. I do not see how it can be maintained that this second conviction of self-consciousness is merely derived from the first. Or, indeed, how anything to which it bears witness can be other than real: for only inference, not experience, can err. Of course, it may be replied that we often confuse our inferences from experience with the experience itself, and that the data of self-consciousness may be misinterpreted. Now it is obvious that we may argue wrongly from what is in itself true, but it is hard to understand how data can be essentially misinterpreted. If not self-evident,

how are they data at all? Now the sense of inward resistance (which cannot mean anything but resistance from lower levels of our own nature) is surely a datum. Resistance to a pure not-self no more resembles moral effort or progress, or anything that we could call (however metaphorically) self-mastery, than the effort of a dog to break loose from its chain.

It may be said that in reality we resist, in such cases, not strictly self, but the after-effects—bad habits and perverted tastes—which previous wrong-doing or wrong-thinking, or neglect, has left behind in us. But still that which we resist is not merely certain dispositions in the brain. For the brain, regarded thus in and by itself, would be simply an external obstacle like any other external obstacle. The resistance, however nearly automatic it has become, is still psychic: it has still the activity of spirit, not the inertia of matter. Mere matter, or mere physical force, cannot deflect the movements of spirit in any sense that concerns its moral self-culture, its progress, its fidelity to ideals. Neither can the opposition of other wills. Nothing can alter the character of the person, except with the co-operation of his own lower centres.

A certain difficulty may now be noticed, which may, in some minds, render this idea hard of acceptance. Can self really be divided? These lower levels of psychic activity, must they not either *be* our very selves or not? When we speak of self-control must this not be somehow a metaphor, rather than literally true? For it does not seem enough to affirm that two *parts* of the soul conflict. For in that case the ultimate victory would rest, not with the soul as such, the true man in the integrity of his being, but with a part of him; and the sense of internal conflict surely means something more inward and more paradoxical than the opposition of two entities merely included in one larger. And therefore to regard the enemy as “myself, yet not myself,” may always convey to some minds a suggestion of logical impossibility.

But just here lies the mistake. We can do justice to no spiritual philosophy if we make the rigid, mutually exclusive terms of formal logic our units of discourse. In logic “A is either B or not B,” simply because A is taken at the outset to represent the self-contained and impenetrable unit of discourse every question about which must be answered by *aye* or *no*. But there is no obligation, on the face of it, to apply this method of description to a spiritual entity. No contradiction is involved in the refusal to submit to any such constraint. And the testimony of consciousness, as I believe, demands this refusal. We must accept the paradox, “It is no more I that do it but sin that dwelleth in me,” as a fair statement of half the truth. The very word “sin” seems to contradict the statement, for it implies some measure at least of personal responsibility. But the contradiction is not in logic, for the very reason that it lies deeper than logic: it is the

diremption of that very centre of personal identity which is the ground of all thought and all logical process.

The application of the whole foregoing discussion to the question of the future life should now be obvious. I have tried to show that the essence of freedom lies in self-direction and control, real and not pre-determined. If the individual is either the product of lifeless matter and energy, or is but a phase or function of universal spirit, there is no meaning in freedom. Even if that universal spirit has set us to turn upon our own axis, still there is no freedom unless it (or He) has really given to us our own souls. That is the first position.

The second is this : that self-direction is neither a mere question of the frontier of mind and body, nor yet a remote ideal attained only by devotees or other exceptional persons. It is graded right up from the one end of the scale to the other. Those, therefore, that would prove immortality merely from the immediate relations of mind to body, and those, on the other hand, who rely upon mystic experiences, both fail to complete the argument. For without some conception, however imperfect, of the ideal personality, or of what constitutes it such, we miss the key to the understanding even of the lower. Those who deal with the subject of moral and spiritual self-culture always, and rightly, tend to regard it not simply as an advance into an unknown land, a progress towards a purely external ideal, but as a self-realisation, self-finding, or the recovery of the real clue to one's life ; or under some such form of thought. Immortality, though it may not be inalienable, is not a mere "find" or distant prize.

Lastly, it was necessary to see clearly that the will is nothing abstract, but, as it were, the person over again, the self regarded further back, the soul within or behind the soul. The higher will-centre that controls the lower will-centres must, like these, be inseparable from consciousness, thought, feeling, and desire. And if we could represent to ourselves the perfected personality somewhere beyond death, surely we should see gathered around it even the counterpart of the sights and sounds that give joy to us on the earth-plane.

But now I may deal with a possible objection, or difficulty, which has special reference to the second position in our summary, and might have been dealt with at that point but that too long a digression would have broken and obscured the outline there sketched out. Granted, it may be said, that moral progress is self-realisation, that it moves towards a goal envisaged, so to speak, by the Creator at the beginning, that it seeks the solution of the meaning of our several lives, yet does this imply that even before that solution is found there is that in the soul that must be immortal ? Is not just the immortality itself part of what we seek ? When we talk of finding our true selves, surely this is not to be pressed to mean that we have only to uncover a perfect self in us that has always existed ?



This objection is certainly a sound warning against a hasty statement of the doctrine. Yet, as an objection, I think it can be shown to be untenable.

We might answer it—so far as relates to the simple fact of a future life—by reference to the lower levels of freedom. When once we have recognised freedom on what I have called the A level, we can trace its inferior forms much more clearly on the lower levels, and there at least it is not a mere ideal, but a fact. The total relation of soul to body is involved. And this familiar problem is much more easily understood when we find our clue in the victorious soul that dominates not mere dead matter, but that alliance of matter and mind that St. Paul calls the “psychic man.” The very resistance of these lower centres to what is above them, as well as their dominance of what is below, expresses that freedom.

But, none the less, it is well to discuss the objection on its own ground. We may state the question thus: Is the higher selfhood at which we aim, in its essence, potential only, or is it actual? Granted, as we must grant, that it is not unaffected by the issue of the conflict, are we to say that it is only a plan and an ideal, or that it is a reality striving to emerge into fulness of activity and to win the whole of its rightful inheritance?

It is impossible to set forth my full reasons for believing in the latter alternative, but there is one line of thought that may perhaps be sufficiently worked out for our present purpose. The whole meaning of spiritual effort and moral conflict is to realise in the *particulars* of life the demands of a will that has already accepted the claim of the higher ideal in itself and as a whole. That this acceptance is not merely an otiose homage rendered to goodness in the abstract is proved by the very fact that there is some attempt to carry it out point by point. The second of our two alternative interpretations of the A level is undoubtedly supported by analysis of the experience.

Why is that interpretation not more obvious? For a very clear reason. It is of the very essence of spiritual conflict to be dissatisfied—to think of the goal as beyond and above us, not to tell ourselves continually how splendid a thing it is that we are seeking it. We strive “not as though we had already attained,” because to rest upon the will to attain as in itself virtual attainment would be to stultify that very will. Martensen, the Danish theologian, who, though a Lutheran, accepted what is known as the doctrine of Final Perseverance, makes a notable remark, which, quite apart from its more special theological applications, is well worth quoting in this connection. He says that the possibility of falling from grace has a certain subjective validity for the natural man. To turn it the other way, we can only rightfully use the thought of essential victory to console us against the discouragements and defects if we so think of it as to make the very idea of sin



contradictory and absurd to us, and to stultify the first advances of temptation. This is surely the thought behind St. Paul's words : "How shall we who died unto sin live any longer therein ?"

But we are not discussing the matter from a strictly theological standpoint, or with reference to special religious tenets. And there is no intention to maintain here anything more than is necessary to the argument, namely, that the higher self is behind as well as in front of moral effort, and that this effort can be viewed either from the side of the lower or from the side of the higher, either as a goal to be reached or as the struggle of what is greatest in us to break the barriers that close it in.

Now there is one special hindrance among all the many hindrances to moral progress which, in the nature of the case, occupies a special position, and affords special matter for consideration that is relevant to our present purpose. A well-known divine, I believe, decided, as a result of definite investigation, that the greatest reason for backwardness in the spiritual life was indolence. There is much to be said for this conclusion, and at any rate indolence, or lack of sufficient endeavour, must hold a peculiar place where the whole question is that of effort against obstacles. Let us note where this is relevant for us.

Indolence is one of the defects against which we strive. It is also, unlike the others, a defect of the striving itself. It is at once toughness in the wood and bluntness in the saw. It is objectively one of the obstacles to be overcome, and at the same time it is, subjectively, the fact of not resisting those obstacles with sufficient whole-heartedness or faith. Now effort to overcome lack of effort is, so to speak, effort at a higher power. It takes us to the very foundation of the aspiring self in us. And for that very reason it gives us, over the edge, a glimpse of the self whose vindication and establishment is goal of the aspiration.

Note next that very strenuous endeavour often meets with almost complete failure, at least in respect of the special immediate object we have in view. We seem to hurl ourselves mainly against a door that will not burst open. But how can this apply to the effort against indolence, since indolence is not merely failure in the struggle but grievous defect in the very effort itself ? And yet we know that there is such a thing as hard struggle against indolence : and by this I mean not merely against unwillingness to get out of bed, or do one's work thoroughly, or to undertake new responsibilities, but indolence in the pursuit of the inclusive object, spiritual victory and attainment. To strive hard against not striving hard is a paradoxical undertaking, but many of us know quite well what it means. It was George MacDonald, unless I am mistaken, who said that somehow he had never been able to do his best. This remark referred to literary achievement, so is not strictly applicable to moral endeavour ; but it is closely

parallel, and helps to illustrate our point. To say "there is that in me that strives against my sin" is much less than to say "there is that in me that strives against my slowness to resist sin." Here we really catch an elusive glimpse of the higher self, because otherwise striving against indolence as such would be a contradiction. We escape from the logical contradiction only when we fall back on the moral and psychic contradiction, the stress between self and self, of which Romans vii. gives the classic expression.

I say an "elusive glimpse," because to fix our eyes upon that in us which strives even during and against our indolence in the strife would either give us final victory or cause the sword to drop from our hold. But easy victory is ruled out by the fact of the warfare, and soporifics are denied us by its laws. Therefore, whether the thought of it be considered as helpful or as harmful, the *fact* of this higher self that strives only for freedom, not for being, is not discredited by its obscurity, or the less solid and real because it is not steadily luminous before the eyes of all.

A few concluding words on the general treatment of the subject. It may well be that points have been assumed in the course of our argument which for some would require proof. But this is hardly avoidable in dealing with so large a subject in a small space. It is something even to trace one line of thought and see whither it carries us: for the exposition of a philosophical doctrine, and the carrying it out to further consequences, is in the long run its best defence. If we can show the connection between Indeterminism, in the form here set forth, and life after death, we gain, in so doing, a deeper understanding of both.

Nor is there the least need, in spite of current prejudice, to apologise for indulging in metaphysic. To many, the merely empirical arguments for survival, or what is called the moral argument, seem the most convincing, but, in spite of all demur, the writer of this article is prepared to maintain that here, if anywhere in the sphere of pure reason, metaphysics must be supreme. We cannot rest on probabilities, analogies, pious hopes at this central point. We *must* ask: "What do we mean by this self or soul, whose immortality is denied or affirmed? Is the burden of proof on the side of the denial or the affirmation, or on neither rather than the other?" And many other questions which touch metaphysics on the one hand and common sense on the other.

But here I would hasten to add that the metaphysic we demand is not speculation, but the *felt* metaphysic that has its roots in experience and returns back upon experience established and enriched.

Thinking upon such a subject is not simply a matter of working out arguments. Its deepest function is to join with other influences in lifting our minds to the plane on which we see and feel our immortality. A false metaphysic is behind many of the assumptions even of persons

not at all philosophical ; and it is the business of the true metaphysic to remove the false. For false ideas not only lead reason astray, but block insight. And, personally, I believe that one of the false ideas which is partly the effect and partly the cause of much restricted and perverted thinking is Determinism ; that when we have grasped the real meaning of our souls' autonomy there are vistas open to us where else there were a dense thicket ; and that the chief of these is the vista that reveals a world beyond not only the dissolution of this body, but all possible death.

## EVIDENTIAL MATTER OF PRACTICAL IMPORTANCE

BY (UNA) LADY TROUBRIDGE

**I**S there any investigator of Psychical Research who has not been asked the following question :

“ Have you ever received any information through a medium that was of any real use to you or to anyone else ? ”

During the four years that my friends and acquaintances have known of my interest in psychical investigation I have grown to expect this question as inevitable. It has been put to me by people of all ages and both sexes ; it has been asked in every shade and degree of tone and manner. There is the questioner whose accents announce the triumphant conviction that no affirmative answer is possible, and whose superficial knowledge of the subject, culled from novels and the daily Press, limits Psychical Research to mainly or entirely fraudulent physical séances at which musical boxes float in the air, tambourines are shaken, knees are slapped, and voices devoid of any apparent identity proclaim from total darkness their satisfaction at their post-mundane condition.

There is also the orthodox Roman Catholic questioner, with whom, as a Roman Catholic myself, I frequently come in contact, and who is wrapped in a garment of obediently docile ignorance of all matters which Holy Church (who wisely legislates for the masses and not for the individual), pending more conclusive evidence, views with suspicion ; or who comes to me hot from Father Lepicier's cheering picture of a discarnate condition where we shall all float in nothingness bereft even of those faculties which we possessed in this world, and where apparently, as Father Lepicier further assures us, only the powers of evil are able to supply the necessary energies for attempted communication with our bereaved friends or relations. This type of questioner generally conveys the impression of hovering ecstatically on the fringe of forbidden and therefore enthralling things, and shows either incredulity or disappointment when one is unable to furnish any evidence that either Mrs. Piper, Mrs. Thompson, or Mrs. Leonard anointed themselves with witch's salve or had dealings with the devil.

Then there is the genuine novice, but unprejudiced inquirer, who may be awakening to an interest in the subject from impersonal and purely intellectual reasons, or who may have suffered a bereavement that has for the first time aroused in him speculations as to whether

any communication with the departed can be possible, and, if possible, legitimate.

But all these types of inquirer, and their variants, which are legion, have one sentiment or expectation in common. It is rare to find an individual who does not feel that if those who have passed on to a future state are to communicate with us at all, they must in any case be expected to benefit their correspondents in this world.

The demands made upon them vary, and exhibit a complete disregard in most instances of the known characteristics of the purporting communicators prior to bodily death. Some of my interlocutors expect a certain elevated standard of spiritual guidance—others yearn openly for “wrinkles” that will supplement by supernatural means their intellectual capacities, and furnish a short cut to high achievements. Others yet again frankly desire assistance in purely material and financial matters, and cannot conceive that their late—not greatly lamented—uncle or aunt should communicate with them and yet disregard so vital a matter as their interests in the impending Grand National, hints as to investments likely to prove lucrative, or a warning that the kitchen chimney will shortly catch fire.

I do not find as a rule that answers in general terms find much favour with my questioners, though there are many such answers which should justly receive consideration. There is a prevailing tendency, where there is any belief in survival at all, to treat the departed very much as the uneducated Latin or Russian treats the Saints; that is to say, as folk who have been removed to another sphere for the sole purpose of remaining within earshot of earthly needs and demands, and of placing their increased powers at the disposal of the importunate of the earth.

At one time I used to answer these eternal questions by patiently expounding certain generalities, as, for instance, that the scientific investigator, being mainly concerned with the obtaining of evidence susceptible of verification, is liable in his records to pass over without comment, or at any rate to lay little stress upon ethical matter which, while quite lofty and interesting in itself, might nevertheless emanate from the medium's mind, and, except in those cases where it denotes accurately the opinions or characteristics of the purporting communicator, cannot be put to any test of authenticity.

I have also pointed out that my investigations (as, indeed, is the case with most genuine investigations with genuine mediums) have led me to intercourse with ostensible communicators of no highly exalted type, but merely the deceased friends or relations who lived on this earth the lives of ordinary people, compound of good and bad qualities and impulses, some a little better than others, but none of them aspiring during their lives to abnormal saintliness or world reformation. Few of us can honestly claim the right to expect

communications from elect spirits, and failing such a right as might be inferred from close friendship, relationship, or a community of high spiritual aims, it is obvious that nothing is required beyond the medium's hysteria and the sitter's vanity to account for the frequent visits of Saints Peter and Paul, not to mention even less excusable masquerades of holiness, to spiritualistic séances.

I have often pointed out to my interlocutors that we all have valued and esteemed living friends of many years' standing who have never offered us a word of advice on matters spiritual, ethical, or material, and whom we have not valued less, but possibly more, for this forbearance; friends who have never dwelt much, if at all, upon elevated matters, and that we have really no adequate grounds for expecting that they should start doing so the moment they leave their physical bodies, or that simple folk, young and old, whom we have known during their lives as chiefly interested in simple matters and workaday pleasures and troubles, should, in the twinkling of an eye, return to us charged with theories and maxims regarding the deeper questions of the Universe. Even the Scriptures allow of a hypothetically long interval before the "last trump" shall be the signal for a universal spiritual change.

I have also vainly pointed out the chaos that would result were certain privileged persons to receive wholesale supernormal information regarding future mundane events, and the total collapse of all individual effort that would be likely to ensue were every student enabled to rest on his oars secure in the certainty that Demosthenes, Newton, Galileo, or Titian, as the case might be, could be relied upon to supply the ideas and do the work at regular and frequent intervals.

And none of these generalities have sufficed to satisfy my catechisers, many of whom have given me clearly to understand that they retained the unaltered opinion that a departed spirit, in order to qualify as a seemly and acceptable communicator, must conform rigidly to pattern, regardless of such a detail as former identity; must forswear all frivolity or humour—these above all, even in a discarnate Dan Leno, would be out of place—as unworthy their advance in status; must, indeed, discard as *infra dig.* many characteristics and qualities for which they were loved and appreciated in life, and, if unable to achieve a lofty eminence as spiritual guides, must at the very least give evidence of some supernormal power of aiding their survivors.

It is partly for this reason that I feel I am likely to find a fair number of readers among these inexperienced inquirers as well as among practised investigators, to whom a good piece of evidence is always welcome, who will be interested if I can relate an instance where I have received information given through a medium, and purporting to come from a deceased friend, which was of definite and practical use to me, conveying accurate knowledge of an important



fact unknown at that time—so far as it appears possible to ascertain—to any living conscious mind ; certainly unknown to me at a time when my ignorance of the fact in question might have been fraught with the gravest consequences.

The incident to which I refer took place on December 27th, 1917, at a sitting which I took on that day with the trance medium, Mrs. Osborne Leonard. I was accompanied to this sitting by my friend and fellow-worker, Miss Radclyffe-Hall, who took full notes of everything that was said either by the medium or myself.

Mrs. Leonard is by now almost too well known to the public as well as to investigators to require any introduction. For those few readers who may not know of her by name it suffices to say that her capacities and her integrity have been put to the severest possible tests, not only by Miss Radclyffe-Hall and myself, but by many other competent investigators. She and Mrs. Piper are the only two professional trance mediums whom the Society for Psychical Research has ever officially retained and made the subject of an organised investigation. Those who would learn more of Mrs. Leonard's trance and of her control, Feda (the personality who claims to be an independent entity acting as interpreter between the incarnate sitter and discarnate communicators, and to speak through Mrs. Leonard's organism when the latter is in a trance condition), can study her phenomena in Sir Oliver Lodge's book *Raymond* and in the Paper by Miss Radclyffe-Hall and myself which appears in Part 78, Vol. XXX., of the *Proceedings* of the Society for Psychical Research.

As a matter of fact, with regard to the incident which I now propose to relate, Mrs. Leonard's integrity is of very little importance. This because, so far as can be ascertained, there was at the time when she made the statements with which I am about to deal no living person who could have supplied her with the necessary data, even had she desired to obtain them by fraudulent means. While discussing such a possibility, I must not fail to make it quite clear to my readers that both Miss Radclyffe-Hall and I are as convinced of Mrs. Leonard's integrity as of our own. The question of the possibility or impossibility of her obtaining information by fraudulent means is raised merely with a view to giving a further value to the present incident by emphasising that in this particular case it is my opinion that even deliberate fraud, of however skilful a nature, would not have assisted the medium.

The incident concerned my daughter, Andrea, who at the time of the sitting was seven years old, and the purporting communicator was my friend and cousin, who appears in the aforementioned Paper in S.P.R. *Proceedings* under the initials A.V.B. At the time of the sitting with which I am dealing A.V.B. had been dead one year and seven months, and prior to her death she had known and taken a friendly interest in my little girl.

If we accept the possibility of a surviving A.V.B. retaining a power of communication with incarnate friends, and as being the communicator of the facts which follow, then we may with reason attribute to her the double motive of trying to warn me and thus save me from avoidable trouble, and at the same time to benefit a child whom she had known and liked.

Another point, less easy of even hypothetical explanation, will have to be discussed further on; namely, the means whereby the information communicated to me could have been accessible to any mind, even that of a discarnate A.V.B.

In December, 1917, when I took the sitting in question, I was not anonymous to Mrs. Leonard. The question therefore arises, in connection with any data referring to the child given through Mrs. Leonard, as to how much normal knowledge she can be supposed to have possessed of the child in question, and whether she had ever seen her. As a matter of fact, throughout the whole period of our studies in Psychical Research, both with Mrs. Leonard and with other mediums, Miss Radclyffe-Hall and I have always borne in mind that any mention of Andrea purporting to come from the communicator A.V.B. would be of evidential value. We had therefore been particularly careful never to mention the child, in the hearing of any medium. It was only a few weeks prior to the sitting under discussion, when circumstances rendered it inevitable that Mrs. Leonard and ourselves should be temporarily established at Datchet, that we decided to tell Mrs. Leonard our names, and that we had taken a house at Datchet and should be living there with my child, whose age or sex were not mentioned to her. The child and Mrs. Leonard had actually spent only three days in the same village prior to the communications being received concerning her. As regards the possibility of Mrs. Leonard's having seen her, although Mrs. Leonard's cottage was at some little distance from our house, it must of course be assumed for evidential purposes that Mrs. Leonard may have done so and identified her, as there were three days during which this might have occurred, although I personally do not think she had done so. It must, however, be assumed that, had Mrs. Leonard wished, she could easily have ascertained that I had one little daughter, and have acquired a general idea of the child's age, height, and appearance. Under these circumstances no evidential value can be ascribed to the larger part of an elaborate description of the child which was given by Feda on December 27th, 1917, as a preface to the conveying of more important matter. For this reason I shall not quote that part of the sitting which contains the description of the child's personal appearance and an apparent attempt to spell a pet name by which she is called at home. Nevertheless, in fairness to Mrs. Leonard, it must be clearly stated that this description was remarkably detailed and accurate, and was not such as could have

been given by anyone who had caught a mere casual glimpse of the child. In fact it contained, among many points indicating a close acquaintance with her appearance, the accurate mention of one characteristic which, although present, had remained unnoticed by Miss Radclyffe-Hall throughout the whole of two years during which she had seen the child constantly, almost daily, and under every circumstance and condition. This peculiarity was mentioned by Fedá in the following words: "The chin is a little rounded, a tiny bit tilted, it comes a bit forward. Oh, *and it's got the beginnings of a little mark here.*" (Fedá touches the middle of the chin indicating where a cleft or dimple would be found.)

Now the mention of this "beginnings of a little mark" in the child's chin is interesting for several reasons. Firstly because, as has already been said, this characteristic, while existing in Andrea, is so slight as to be almost imperceptible. It is only visible in certain lights, and, in fact, one of the child's relations at one time maintained to me that the cleft did not exist, and only perceived it when I placed the child's head in a light that brought out the peculiarity. Another reason why the mention of this cleft is of interest is that I had not discussed it with many people, and in my opinion it can hardly have come to the medium's knowledge by any normal means. But there is a third point of view from which the mention of this cleft in the chin is interesting. I have said that Miss Radclyffe-Hall had lived for two years in close contact with the child without remarking it, but it is a fact which cannot be too clearly emphasised that I had for the first time pointed out the cleft in Andrea's chin to Miss Radclyffe-Hall, and had discussed it at some length with her, less than a week before the sitting of December 27th, 1917. What is therefore the connection, if any, to be deduced between the fact that this characteristic of the child's had been uppermost in the minds of both Miss Radclyffe-Hall and myself a few days prior to the sitting, and the mention of it, spontaneously, by Fedá? In this case coincidence can hardly be stretched to serve as an explanation, and as neither I nor any member of Andrea's family have a cleft in the chin we cannot suspect a chance shot at a hereditary trait. It must be confessed that, although both Miss Radclyffe-Hall and myself admitted of the possibility of A.V.B. having overheard our discussion and made use of what she had heard as furnishing a valuable clue to the child's identity, we were inclined to lean to the more obvious explanation of telepathy between the medium and the sitter, between the medium and the recorder, or between the medium and both sitter and recorder.

Moreover, most investigators remain human, and the fact that we were most anxious to disbelieve in the evidential accuracy of the information which was subsequently received at the same sitting, and were therefore inclined to grasp at anything in the sitting which would

further our wishes, strengthened our tendency to put down the entire contents of the sitting as a combination of telepathy from ourselves to the medium, combined with a certain amount of unconscious elaboration and embroidery on her part.

Subsequent events have, however, led us to feel that we fell deeply into the perhaps not uncommon error of riding telepathy to death, for since the sitting did most certainly include accurate statements which could not be accounted for by telepathy, not only from anyone present, but from any living conscious mind, but which might conceivably have been acquired from a discarnate mind possessing faculties so far unknown to us, there appears to be no very adequate ground for the assumption that the mention of the cleft in the child's chin did not originate from the same source.

Prior to the personal description of Andrea, Fedá had remarked that the description which she was going to give of a child referred to someone who did not feel well. She added that the child didn't look ill to her, and the sitting went on as follows :

U.V.T. : [Myself] Does Ladye [A.V.B.] think it's ill ?

F. : No, but she's been anxious because she doesn't think it's been well ; yes, she is anxious.

U.V.T. : Can't you get from her what's wrong ?

F. : What is it, Ladye ? [Fedá touches the small of the medium's back and moves her hand downwards.] Fedá doesn't know what it is. Ladye can't get that quite, but she thinks there is something wrong. Wrong now, Ladye ? Yes, she says wrong now. Not only one thing, more all over, but it's as if Ladye thinks there's something wrong just about there. [Fedá moves her hand about vaguely all over the medium's back.] Wait a minute, Ladye is trying to move Fedá's hand to show where it is. [Fedá finally places her hand on the medium's back on the left side exactly at the base of the left lung.] Something not quite right there.

M.R.H. : [Miss Radclyffe-Hall] : But how is it that Mrs. Una would not have known about this ?

F. : Ladye doesn't know ; she says she thought Mrs. Una did know that the child was not quite all right.

M.R.H. : She didn't know anything serious was the matter.

F. : Ladye says she's not going to call it serious if you are careful. She says she knows you are careful. But she says you are to be awful careful of draught. She says that there is a draught where the child is. Ladye has felt the draught.

U.V.T. : We must move the bed.

F. : Ladye says it's only a weakspot, and she'll grow out of it ; it's *there*, Ladye says. [Fedá again touches the left side of the medium's back in exactly the same place as before, at the base of the left lung.] Look, Mrs. Una, just here.

U.V.T.: Yes, I see. Are you sure of the exact position, Fedra, it's very important ?

F.: Yes, Mrs. Una, it's just here.

M.R.H.: Are you sure it's the left side ?

F.: Yes, Ladye quite sure, the left side.

U.V.T.: We've always thought that the child was so strong.

F.: She says, in every other way, yes, but you must be careful, she says.

M.R.H.: Does she think the child should go to a specialist ?

U.V.T.: She certainly shall go at once.

F.: Ladye says, supposing she goes, he couldn't say that anything is there, but she says if he spoke the exact truth he would tell you to be careful. Ladye says the child has a wonderful constitution, and that if you are careful of cold now she will be wonderfully strong. She is sure he will tell you just to be careful. She says that they don't always tell you in time. *She* tells you *before* it's there. She says she wants to tell you she's sure there's no germ *whatever*; she says that you must only be careful, but that there *is* a draught where the child is. She says, keep her warm about the body, Mrs. Una, round here. [Fedra indicates abdomen and loins.] And about her legs. She says there's another reason that has to be taken into consideration; wait a minute; when the child was young something happened which might have left a weakness behind, and she wants you to know that your impression was right to guard against this. She says that there is nothing to cure, only a weak spot to guard. She says something happened a long time ago which paved the way for care to become necessary.

M.R.H.: But surely she approves of plenty of air for the child ?

F.: She says yes, but never let it feel cold; air won't hurt it, but she says there's a draught, a draught; it seems to come from the door, Ladye says; it sweeps across from the door to the window.

In commenting upon the foregoing extract, it appears to me of primary importance before entering into the verification of A.V.B.'s statements to discuss how far we are justified in calling in the hypothesis of telepathy from someone present to account for the whole, or for any part, of the statements made. It is important, for instance, to make it clear whether or not I and Miss Radclyffe-Hall were aware of anything in the child's condition which could cause anxiety on our part regarding her health. It will be noticed that Miss Radclyffe-Hall protested against the suggestion of there being anything wrong with Andrea. The facts at the time of the sitting were as follows. Some months previously the child had undergone the slight operation of the removal of tonsils and adenoids; this was decided upon in consequence of a prolonged tendency to colds and a month of tiresome bronchial cough. I had worried to some extent over the event, but merely because the child had always been so robust that any indisposition on



her part was unexpected, and was rather unreasonably held by me to "spoil her record." Just prior to the sitting I had been feeling that she was slightly off colour, and a local doctor, who had been called in by me in consequence of a quite unfounded apprehension that the child had caught whooping-cough, had also been asked by me to suggest a tonic. This he refused to do, asserting that there was no need for it, the child being in perfect health. On that occasion, namely on December 16th, 1917, in making his general examination of the child as a new patient, he sounded her lungs, and rather worried me by remarking that at the apex of one of the lungs he had noticed a sound that suggested what he termed "puerile breathing" (a term unknown to me), but that further examination had revealed that both apices sounded exactly alike, and that all was more than well. It is, however, a fact that there had for a moment arisen in my mind anxiety that something should be wrong with the *apex* of one lung in a child who had shown, and who showed, no sign of any such trouble. Some days later Miss Radclyffe-Hall's London physician, Doctor Joseph Birt, called to see her. This gentleman is also my doctor when I am in London, and has been my little girl's principal medical attendant throughout the usual vicissitudes since her birth. In the course of conversation I mentioned to him the incident of the country doctor, remarking that the whooping-cough had luckily not materialised. Doctor Birt remarked that he had never heard the term "puerile breathing," but that the child, who had quite recently been his patient subsequent to her adenoid operation, and whom he had examined thoroughly three weeks prior to the sitting, was perfectly all right in every way.

It must here be stated that Doctor Birt is not only a well-known practitioner, but one in whom I have always had the very greatest confidence; he was originally recommended to me by a celebrated specialist as being "the best general practitioner in London." This is a point which should be borne in mind in view of the fact that it was Doctor Birt to whom I took the child after the sitting with which we are dealing, during which A.V.B. had communicated her anxiety concerning her health.

It will thus be seen that there were some grounds for assuming that Mrs. Leonard might have caught from my mind telepathically that I had recently undergone a trifling anxiety regarding my child's health. Though if we are to assume that a knowledge of this slight anxiety was telepathically accessible to her, she might equally be expected to have acquired the knowledge that my anxiety, trifling as it was, had been allayed. This, however, she was apparently unable to do, for although Feda says that the child does not look ill to her, and although, as will be seen, the recorder protests repeatedly that the child is strong, etc., and that I do not know of any illness, A.V.B.



is unshaken in her statement that there is something wrong—wrong now, something requiring care—and the exact seat of the trouble is indicated clearly, definitely, and repeatedly, in spite of a cross-questioning by Miss Radclyffe-Hall and myself which might have been expected to evoke some hesitation or hedging on the part of medium, control, or communicator. The statements that care should be exercised against draughts, and that there is a draught “where the child is,” are not uninteresting. We will briefly comment upon them before entering further into the verification of A.V.B.’s diagnosis. It is quite true that at Datchet the child’s bed was placed in the somewhat unusual position of being in a direct draught between the door and the window. This fact might possibly have been read by the medium from my mind, but I do not think she could have acquired it by normal means, as she had certainly never entered my house at Datchet. But what is more interesting is the fact that the statement about draughts and the anxiety shown in this connection, together with the directions about keeping the child warm about the body and legs, are, as is sufficiently demonstrated by the fact of the child’s sleeping in a draught, in direct opposition to all my Spartan theories of upbringing, being, on the other hand, notably characteristic of the purporting communicator, A.V.B. A.V.B. feared draughts and cold in any form, and emphatically would have pursued the policy of guarding a child by warmth and wrapping up, as opposed to my own rooted preference for the opposite system of hardening by exposure.

One other point is worthy of mention before returning to the question of diagnosis, and that is the mention by A.V.B. of there being a reason connected with something that happened when the child was young which must be taken into consideration as having possibly left a weakness behind. Something that happened a long time ago which paved the way for care to become necessary. Here, again, something may have been read from my mind which, the child’s health being under discussion, would naturally call up the memory of the only two occasions upon which it had caused me anxiety. A.V.B. may refer to either of these two occasions, both of which occurred “a long time ago.” She may be recollecting a very grave intestinal illness of which the child nearly died at Malta when she was two and a half years old. This illness is one which, in the majority of cases, does leave a constitutional delicacy even for years afterwards, and although it did not do so for very long in Andrea’s case, it certainly left an indelible impression on my mind, a fact well known to A.V.B. during her lifetime. On the other hand, she was probably well aware that during the first six months of the war, when I was constrained to leave Andrea for four months with friends in Florence, the child suffered during that winter from a tendency to coughs and colds, a thing so unusual to her that I feel certain I must have mentioned the

fact to A.V.B. As, however, no ill effects perceptible by any medical man resulted from this winter at Florence, I incline to the opinion that A.V.B. intended a reference to the really grave illness aforementioned from which Andrea's recovery was almost a miracle.

And now we come to A.V.B.'s actual statement of the exact place in which she is convinced that Andrea has a delicate spot, which if care be not taken may cause trouble.

Before going further, it is important to repeat that my momentary agitation regarding the episode of the "puerile breathing" had applied to the apices of the child's lungs. During my life it has fallen to my share to meet cases of serious lung trouble affecting people to whom I was deeply attached or in whom I was interested. It is worthy of note, however, that in those cases where I was in a position to know the full details of the case, including what part of the lung had originally been attacked, in no instance has the *base* of the lung been the seat of anxiety. In one case in which I was deeply interested the trouble originated as a consequence of pleurisy, for which the patient had undergone an operation between the sixth and seventh ribs under the breast. In another case suspicion centred in the apex of the lung above the clavicle, and in yet another, the most recent case that has aroused my interest, the apices of the lungs were also the cause of the forebodings. It might therefore be expected that any anxiety, however little justified, that I might have felt consciously or subconsciously regarding the child's lungs would have centred upon that part of the lung or lungs which I had known to be affected in the case of my friends, especially in view of the country doctor's reference to "puerile breathing" when sounding the apices of Andrea's lungs. Yet it will be seen, on referring to the extract from the sitting, that A.V.B., through Feda, suggests the need of care in quite a different place, namely at the back, at the extreme base of the left lung. This position was exactly indicated by Feda, who kept the medium's hand upon the spot until I had had every opportunity of accurately observing it, and of pointing it out to Miss Radclyffe-Hall, who, with the aid of the lamplight and that of a fire which was burning in the room, was also able to observe clearly the medium's movements. It will also be seen that Miss Radclyffe-Hall's question as to whether Feda was sure that the left side was the one affected, a question of a nature which might easily have tended to confuse the issue, only served to make Feda further emphasise A.V.B.'s statement that the position indicated by her was correct. It must also be noted that A.V.B. emphatically asserts that there is *no germ there whatever*, that she is speaking *before* the trouble which she fears any lack of care might render possible, and says that a doctor could not say there is anything there. She adds that with care the child will be wonderfully strong and that she has a wonderful constitution.

Nevertheless, I left Mrs. Leonard's flat after the sitting in a very perturbed frame of mind. I discussed with Miss Radclyffe-Hall at great length that part of the sitting which had dealt with Andrea. As has before been stated, a great deal had been said that had the aspect of having been read telepathically from my mind, the material being culled from the various data concerning Andrea inevitably lying there in various strata of my consciousness, and Miss Radclyffe-Hall was genuinely inclined to the belief that an unreasonable tendency on my part to morbid anxiety where the child was concerned had affected the medium's sensitive and possibly receptive condition. She, however, quite agreed with me that under the circumstances only a careful and exhaustive examination by a competent medical man would restore my peace of mind, and I therefore made an appointment with Doctor Birt to bring Andrea to see him on the day following the sitting.

On the afternoon of December 28th, 1917, therefore, I took the child, accompanied by her nursery governess, to Doctor Birt's flat. In the presence of the governess I told Doctor Birt that I wanted the child thoroughly overhauled, and that he should examine her lungs, heart, stomach, and indeed everything about her. I added that I was always inclined to be nervous about lungs, and that I wanted the stomach and heart examined as Andrea had once said that her heart thumped, and I thought this might be due to indigestion, as she was inclined to eat too quickly.

Doctor Birt, having undressed Andrea, produced his stethoscope, and I then added, "I want you to be specially careful of the two apices at the back, because of what I told you the doctor at Datchet said about 'puerile breathing,' and also of the base of the left lung." No more was said, and the doctor made a thorough and leisurely examination of the child.

I then asked if there was another room where Doctor Birt and I could talk things over while the governess dressed Andrea. The doctor led the way to another room and proceeded to tell me that the child was splendid in every way, that her heart, stomach, and lungs were perfect, and that no treatment of any kind was necessary. He added, however, "There is just a little roughness of the breathing in one spot at *the base of the left lung*; it is nothing at all; children so often get it after a cough or whooping-cough, and their bronchials are so elastic that it soon passes, but I can hear it in that one spot."

I then asked Doctor Birt to reflect before saying that he was satisfied, saying that if he had the slightest doubt as to his diagnosis, or the slightest fear of any serious trouble, I was ready to employ every specialist in London. Doctor Birt replied that there was absolutely no necessity to call in any other opinion, pointing out that he did not even wish to suggest any treatment, and was perfectly satisfied that I

need have no anxiety. He added, "You see, I know how Andrea lives, with plenty of pure air. If she were the kind of child who was likely to be exposed to foul air or infection, I would tell you to be careful, *as in that case that little weak spot would be a danger, as it would be liable to take any infection.*"

Throughout the above account I have done my best to quote the doctor's words as exactly as possible. I wrote them down immediately on my return home, and I was fortunately able to obtain Doctor Birt's statement that I had in no way misquoted him.

Before leaving his flat I told him quite frankly the reason for my visit to him, and being a very open-minded man, in my opinion neither over-sceptical nor over-credulous, he expressed astonishment and a considerable interest.

Less than a week later, when I had completed my record of all the foregoing incidents, Doctor Birt had occasion to visit Miss Radclyffe-Hall at her London flat. In her presence I read aloud to Doctor Birt my record of what had passed between him and myself on December 28th, 1917, and I also read him the relevant portions of the sitting of December 27th, 1917. Doctor Birt again expressed astonishment and interest, and willingly wrote a brief statement corroborating my record as follows :

*Copy of Dr. Birt's Letter.*

22, Cadogan Court,  
Draycott Avenue, S.W.

Mrs. [Lady] Troubridge has to-day read me her notes of her sitting with Mrs. Leonard on December 27th, 1917.

I examined her little girl Andrea on Friday, December 28th, 1917, and found she had some roughness of her breath sounds over the base of her left lung. Mrs. Troubridge's account of our interview is accurate.

(Signed) J. BIRT, L.R.C.S., L.R.C.P.,  
110, St. James' Court, S.W.  
*January 3rd, 1918.*

My gratitude is due to Doctor Birt for the permission which he willingly accorded me to make use of his name in connection with the publication of this incident. Doctor Birt, who, I understand, has never taken any active interest in either spiritualism or Psychical Research, is to be congratulated, I think, upon his courage and open-mindedness in not desiring to hide behind anonymity in this case.

Shortly after these events, it occurred to Miss Radclyffe-Hall that a case of this kind could only benefit by further corroboration, and on January 18th, 1918, she asked the governess who had accompanied

me to Doctor Birt with the child on December 28th, 1917, to write a brief statement from memory of that visit, and I think this statement is worth quoting in full.

*Miss C. Dillon's Report.*

*January 18th, 1918.*

On December 28th, 1917, I accompanied Mrs. Troubridge and her little girl Andrea to the flat of Dr. Birt in St. James' Court. Dr. Birt was told in my hearing, by Mrs. Troubridge, that Mrs. Troubridge would like him to make a thorough examination of the child. She asked him to examine the heart and stomach, saying that the child had complained of palpitation, which she thought might come from bolting the food. Mrs. Troubridge asked the doctor to examine the lungs also; she asked him to examine the apices of both lungs and the base of the left lung. She gave no reason for making this latter request. I noticed that after the doctor had placed his stethoscope at the base of the left lung and listened for a moment, he made the child fold her arms across her breast and bend forward. I had no idea why Mrs. Troubridge had taken the child to see Dr. Birt, as the child's cold had almost entirely left her for some days. It was not until we returned to Datchet that, during the evening of the same day, Mrs. Troubridge told me what she had been told at Mrs. Leonard's on the previous day. I then reminded Mrs. Troubridge of how the doctor had made the child fold her arms and bend forward while he listened to the base of the left lung, and Mrs. Troubridge said that she also remembered this. I had no reason to suppose that there was anything of the kind the matter at the base of the child's left lung, never having heard it mentioned before Mrs. Troubridge told me what Doctor Birt had said. I was not present when he made his diagnosis to Mrs. Troubridge, as she and the doctor left the room after the examination while I dressed the child.

(Signed) CARRIE DILLON,  
St. Mary's Nursery College,  
Hampstead.

Before concluding, there is one more point in connection with this incident which I wish to bring forward. After long discussion, Miss Radclyffe-Hall and I were satisfied that the diagnosis regarding the delicate spot at the base of Andrea's left lung had not been obtained telepathically by Mrs. Leonard from either of us. It had not been obtained from Doctor Birt's mind, as he had examined the child so recently before the sitting and had passed her as perfectly sound, his examination not having revealed to him a weakness which was



probably not present at the time. Indeed, I think the promptitude with which Doctor Birt told me of this weakness when he did find it makes it very evident that he had not noticed it previously, and that he would have mentioned it to me at once had he done so.

The diagnosis could scarcely have been read from the little girl's own mind, or at least from her conscious mind, as she was unaware that anything was wrong with her. The possibility that the facts were read from the child's subconscious mind, that subconscious mind being in possession of facts regarding the child's physical condition that were unknown to her conscious mind, is too purely hypothetical and unverifiable to be worth discussing here, although some people may take this hypothesis into consideration.

Miss Radclyffe-Hall and I frankly saw no reason for explaining the facts in this manner, and we therefore discussed the possibility that there existed any other person whose mind might have contained consciously some fear or misgiving regarding the base of Andrea's left lung which, obtained telepathically by Mrs. Leonard, might have emerged during her trance in the shape of A.V.B.'s diagnosis.

The only person who appeared worth taking into consideration in this connection was the country doctor who had examined the child on December 16th, 1917, and who had then spoken of "puerile breathing" at the apices of the lungs. It appeared remotely possible that this doctor might have remarked something not quite normal at the base of the left lung, and failed to mention it, either because he was uncertain of his suspicion being correct, or because he did not consider the fact to be of any importance.

In order to discount the possibility of this doctor feeling a reluctance unduly to frighten a mother regarding any doubtful symptom in her child, we decided that Miss Radclyffe-Hall should write to the doctor and ask whether he could assure her, and thus enable her to assure me, that, apart from the discussion re "puerile breathing" at the apices, he would have told me had he noticed any signs of any sort of trouble, however trifling, in any other part of the child's lungs.

The doctor's reply was as follows ; his signature is omitted as he has not been asked for permission to make use of his name :

*Copy of Doctor——'s letter.*

*January 9th.*

DEAR MISS RADCLYFFE-HALL,

I was not concealing anything at all when talking to Mrs. Troubridge.

I found nothing more than I mentioned, and felt confident that there was no other trouble.

Yours sincerely,  
(Signed)——

This letter, in our opinion, disposed of the only conscious living mind which might have communicated to Mrs. Leonard an anxiety regarding the condition of the base of Andrea's left lung. There remains, of course, the question, even if we admit of a surviving A.V.B. as communicating the fact of the child's condition and advising that care should be taken to avoid serious consequences, of how a discarnate entity obtained an insight into the physical condition of an internal organ of an incarnate child.

As to this point I have no explanation to offer that would not be purely hypothetical, and as valueless as must be any purely supposititious adventure into as yet unknown country. I have merely recorded this incident in order, as I said at the outset of this article, to give an example of information received by me through a medium, and purporting to come from a deceased friend, which information was of vital use to me.

In consequence of the sitting of December 27th, and of Dr. Birt's diagnosis on December 28th, 1917, I cancelled several plans that I had made for Andrea's immediate future; I took the extra care suggested to me by the purporting A.V.B. and by Doctor Birt, with the result that within a year Doctor Birt himself and another physician were able to assure me that the trifling delicacy at the base of the left lung had totally disappeared, and that no further precautions were necessary, as Andrea was perfectly sound and well in every way.

## IN MEMORIAM : JAMES HERVEY HYSLOP

THE recent death of Dr. J. H. Hyslop has deprived the world of Psychical Research of one of its most indefatigable workers. For many years he was Secretary and the moving spirit of the American Society for Psychical Research, which owes its present flourishing condition largely to his efforts. The Society was originally founded in 1884 as a branch of the English Society, but owing to the death of its first secretary, Dr. Richard Hodgson, its activities were discontinued in 1895. It was revived by Dr. Hyslop as an independent society, forming a section of the American Institute for Scientific Research, which he incorporated in 1903.

Dr. Hyslop's training and experience in Philosophy and Psychology were such as to fit him in an unusual degree for the work he undertook. He graduated at Wooster University, studied at Leipzig, took his degree of Doctor of Philosophy at John Hopkins University in 1887, and was awarded the LL.D. of Wooster in 1902. In 1895 he was appointed Professor of Logic and Ethics in Columbia University, New York, but he resigned this post in order to devote the whole of his time to the work of the American S.P.R. He further raised a large endowment fund and, in order that the whole of this money should be applied to the work of the Society, he declined to receive any remuneration for his services as Secretary.

Dr. Hyslop's literary output was enormous. He published some seven or eight books on Psychical Research as well as others on Philosophy, Psychology, Logic and Ethics. In addition, he was responsible for a great part of the voluminous *Proceedings* of the American S.P.R., writing, for instance, the whole of Vol. XI., which describes the remarkable Doris Fischer case in 1,024 pages.

In view of this it is hardly surprising that his style was frequently obscure and that repetitions were not infrequent ; none the less, his writings have been widely appreciated and must have exerted a considerable and beneficial influence upon public opinion both in this country and in America.

Dr. Hyslop was one of the doughtiest champions of the spiritistic view ; he rejected with scorn the suggestion that the whole of the evidence could be dismissed as "only telepathy." In this he was perfectly right ; those who attempt thus lightly to evade the obvious *prima facie* indications of the established facts only betray their ignorance and fail to appreciate the fact, which Dr. Hyslop never forgot, that telepathy "cuts both ways."

The present writer is by no means so certain as was Dr. Hyslop that the spiritistic explanation is valid ; there are many contributory causes other than straightforward telepathy which make the work of interpretation extremely difficult, and it is, perhaps, doubtful whether Hyslop allowed them their proper weight in forming his opinions. But however this may be, he possessed the very great and unusual merit of never losing his sense of proportion and his realisation of the intricacy of the problems involved. It is only too common for those who become convinced of the reality of survival and of communication to accept thenceforward, at its face value, all the pseudo-spiritistic utterances which they encounter.

Hyslop never did this ; he was always fully alive to the innumerable possibilities of error and distortion which must beset the process of communication, if such there be, between incarnate and discarnate persons. In his *Life after Death* he gives the best account of these with which the present writer is acquainted.

An exceptionally interesting phase of Dr. Hyslop's work is to be found in the experiments he conducted with Mrs. Chenoweth in connection with the Doris Fischer case. It is not practicable to give a full description of those here ; their essential feature consisted in obtaining through Mrs. Chenoweth material which indicated that certain of the "multiple personalities" of Doris Fischer were really obsessing "spirits." Dr. Hyslop considered that the evidence he obtained firmly established this conclusion. It is possible that he would fail to carry the majority of psychopathologists with him in this contention, but it is certain that the method he devised is a very interesting and ingenious one which we may hope to see applied to future cases.

Dr. Hyslop's work has been of immense value in promoting sane and careful study of Psychical Research in America ; his self-sacrifice and industry have established the subject there on a strong foundation, and there can be little doubt that, greatly as the American Society must feel his loss, his work will be carried forward with continued success.

W. W. S.

## A NOTE ON THE RELIGIOUS VALUE OF PSYCHICAL RESEARCH

BY W. WHATELY SMITH

I WAS recently privileged to read a paper on Psychical Research to a gathering engaged in considering the subject of the Communion of Saints. The subsequent discussion showed the need for making clear how far the results of Psychical Research are likely to have a bearing on Religion and how far the two subjects are independent of one another.

There appears to be so much misapprehension on this point in the mind of the public that it may be worth while to make some attempt to explain briefly what I conceive to be the proper view.

First, then, let me say at once that I do not believe that Psychical Research, however successfully and to whatever conclusions it may be pursued, is calculated to have any direct bearing at all on Religion as properly understood. It may, and probably will, exert a marked influence on the form in which Religion is presented; it is practically certain, in my judgment, that we shall see a wholesale revision and restatement of religious dogma as a result of increasing knowledge of Psychical or Psychological science.

But Religion, properly so-called, is something quite other than a set of dogmas or even a formula for determining conduct. It is essentially a matter of our whole attitude towards life, of our point of view, of our scale of values, and I hold strongly that true religion, the right scale of values, is wholly independent of such a question as whether human personality does or does not survive bodily death and, still more so, of whether this can be proved on scientific grounds.

The acceptance of survival would indeed, in my opinion, allow us to apply an *a fortiori* argument. If, as I believe, the scale of values which is the essential feature of the Christian religion is a necessary and logical deduction from the way the Universe is organized, it will be valid even if there be no survival, and the latter, if it be a fact in Nature, will serve only to reinforce that validity.

Moreover, the question of whether a given religion is true or not is one which cannot be settled by such tests as an appeal to history or even to the accuracy of its statement of fact about the Universe. The only sound test is the pragmatic test; *that* religion is good which *works*, i.e., which fulfils the purpose of a religion. For Religion is made for Man, not Man for Religion, and the latter is of value only



in so far as it enables him to understand and to deal with the Universe in which he finds himself; in so far, in other words, as it promotes his happiness. That the Christian religion, as preached by Christ, satisfies this test I firmly believe, and, so believing, I regard its history, its miracles, and its descriptions of facts as of minor importance. All these might be incontestable and yet it might fail to provide the right scale of values; or all might be mere inventions, and yet the religion might be true. Consequently, I should not regard the proof of the fact of survival, however rigid, as in any way directly confirmatory of the value of Christianity.

But there are indirect ways in which Psychical Research is relevant, and these I believe to be of great practical importance in view of the constitution of man's mind and the processes which lead to belief. Some of these I have discussed elsewhere (*A Theory of the Mechanism of Survival*, ch. VIII.); I have pointed out that the experimental proof of survival would deal an effective *coup de grace* to the cruder forms of materialism, which, although increasingly discredited at the present time, are still more widespread than one could wish. I have also observed that, as a general principle, the more we know of the constitution of the Universe and of the laws which govern it, the better able we shall be to co-operate intelligently in the process of evolution which one believes to be in operation.

But the point I wish to make here is somewhat more specific. If everyone were perfectly intelligent and adequately experienced, the essential standpoint of Christianity would be universally accepted; but this unfortunately is not the case. Comparatively few people regard this standpoint as the necessary and inevitable inference from experience; for most it is not a matter which they accept with the same inevitable conviction which they extend to the rising of the sun, for example. It is a belief of an order falling appreciably short of certainty.

It must be remembered that belief consists in the acceptance of a proposition and this acceptance is a simple matter of psychology which is, or should be, perfectly well understood. The cardinal principle of the Psychology of Belief, as indeed of all psychology, is that we accept those ideas which are productive of the minimum of mental conflict. As a result of our experience, our training, our upbringing, there are formed in our minds certain stable systems of ideas—stable because of the mutual compatibility of their component parts. Any idea which is in compatible with these systems provokes a conflict, is consequently distasteful to us, and so is rejected; conversely, compatible ideas which "fit in," so to say, with our previous experience are acceptable.

Thus many scientists in the past have had formed in their minds systems of ideas derived from their studies and possessed of immense

stability and coherence. These have become co-extensive with their whole mental attitude and, in consequence, many of them have rejected as unacceptable other—religious—systems which have appeared incompatible with them.

The conclusion, therefore, is that any researches which are intrinsically compatible with the religious point of view and which become incorporated with the general mass of public knowledge are calculated to make that point of view more generally acceptable than it formerly was, and as a matter of empirical expediency the question of Survival is of the first importance in this connection. As I have said, I do not regard it as of fundamental importance to Christianity—I should equally call myself a Christian whether I believed in survival or not—but it is, as a matter of fact, commonly preached as an essential part of Christian doctrine. Inasmuch as some people find it difficult or impossible to reconcile a belief in survival with their general scientific knowledge, this fact constitutes for them a difficulty in the way of accepting Christianity.

If we can bring survival into line with scientific knowledge we shall do away with this difficulty and thereby promote that general acceptance of the Christian point of view which I at least regard as infinitely desirable.

## REVIEWS OF BOOKS

**Spiritual Pluralism and Recent Philosophy.** By C. A. RICHARDSON  
M.A. Pp. xxi + 335. 1919. (Cambridge Univ. Press, 14s. net.)

This metaphysical treatise is of special interest to all engaged in Psychical Research, because the author endeavours to show that the spiritual pluralism which he expounds enables him to offer intelligible explanations of all or most of the phenomena or alleged phenomena the investigation of which is "Psychical Research."

The author makes no inquiry into the evidences for the occurrence of the phenomena, but accepts everything from telepathy to clairvoyance, possession, psychometry and "physical phenomena" without question. One feels that he might have tried his hand at explaining these phenomena in terms of his metaphysical theory, while displaying a little more caution and reserve in the difficult evidential questions, which by the great majority of the public to which he appeals will be regarded as at the most still *sub judice*.

But this is a question of personal opinion and policy, difference in regard to which need not and should not in any degree blind us to the interest of Mr. Richardson's attempt to bring all these alleged phenomena into a connected and intelligible picture on the background of his metaphysical theory.

The main feature of this theory is that the universe consists wholly of spiritual beings or selves, the subjects of all experience and the agents in all activities. It follows from this that each human organism is a system or society of such selves constituting a hierarchy presided over by a dominant member.

To the present writer some such view of the mental organisation of the person seems to be irresistibly forced upon us by an impartial study of normal and pathological psychology. But he would prefer to hold it, without committing himself to the wider proposition that all reality is of the same nature. This latter is really a vast extension of a scientific hypothesis which aims at converting it into a metaphysical theory of the universe; and though, no doubt, the attempt to show that it is capable of such extension without logical inconsistency has a certain interest and value, it burdens the hypothesis with a vast weight of difficulty in a needless manner. When the plain man—and indeed the scientific man—is asked to believe that the whole physical universe, including all those things with which physics, astronomy, and geology are concerned, is merely the appearance to him of psychical beings of like nature with himself, he cannot be expected to swallow the proposition without great difficulty, and to suffer from indigestion if he succeeds in doing so. Indeed, Mr. Richardson himself seems to show symptoms of indigestion. He fails, I think, to present a consistent and acceptable account of the physical

world in terms of his theory. He has taken too seriously the vagaries of Mr. B. Russell and the sensationalism of the New Realists ; and is thereby led to the conclusion that "matter in the physical sense" and "the body as a particular material object" are merely "sense-data." But then, seeing that this must lead to solipsism, he rightly adds : "We must therefore postulate a ground of our sense-data, in existent entities other than ourselves," and suggests that this ground is in all cases some other subject or subjects of like nature with one's self. On other pages he tells us that the physical world is merely a logical function of sense-data ; that "a self cannot simply be a logical function of sense-data" ; and that "logical constructions of sense-data can never give a self." Yet it is from the facts of sense-perception that he infers or is led to postulate selves other than his own ; and in another place he speaks of inorganic things not as mere sense-data, or logical functions of them, but as "individual agents of extremely inferior mentality, whose behaviour is sufficiently habitual to admit, for the most part, of description in general terms." The description of physical objects as merely logical functions of sense-data seems designed to soften the difficulty of conceiving them as psychical subjects. But if Mr. Richardson allows himself to postulate "a ground of our sense-data, in existent entities other than ourselves," why should he deny a similar liberty to the physical sciences ?

This is only one example of the fact that the author's metaphysical tendency involves him in unnecessary complexities. The most notable example of this is his determination to deny all temporal attributes to the self or subject in accordance with high metaphysical convention. This results in a chapter on "Immortality," the upshot of which is that all such questions as "Shall I exist for ever or after the death of my body ?" are meaningless, because they seek to apply temporal adjectives to the timeless self ; and they must be replaced by the single question, "Do I exist ?" And this is offered as a key "wherewith the gate to the solution of the riddle of immortality may be unlocked." Yet in spite of this we are told in a later chapter that "pluralism carries with it the assumption of this pre-existence, and the further assumption that during the latter [ante-natal existence] the individual was a conscious being" ; and he discusses the changes, the processes and activities of the self in time as though all that he has written of its timeless nature were a mere form of words, a libation to the high gods of metaphysic.

A further unnecessary complication of similar origin is his doctrine of immanence. The monads of which the world consists may not, in deference to metaphysical convention, be conceived simply as interacting ; a ground of such interaction must be postulated, "a single, universally immanent, concrete entity, whereby there subsists between each subject and every other subject a 'sympathetic rapport.'" And this vague notion of immanence is invoked again to account for the control of the dominant monad of any organism over its fellow members. The dominant is said to be in telepathic communication with its subordinates, and also to be immanent in them. It is thus given a treble connection with them : (1) direct or telepathic action ; (2) its own special immanence ; (3) that connection and capacity for interaction with all other monads which it has in

virtue of the universal immanence of the supreme entity. This multiplication of modes or grounds of interaction is not only needless, but highly detrimental to the author's system of explanation; for the reader is driven to feel that he has constructed a world where all things are possible, and therefore no particular explanation of any particular phenomenon is requisite or valid.

Mr. Richardson, in fact, by his denial of all temporal and spatial attributes to his monads and his assumption of their universal interaction with one another, has made a system under which explanation of anything whatever is too facile to be satisfactory; for only in a world where some things are not possible do we feel the need of explanations of such events as we observe; and this too great facility of explanation mars all his discussion of "psychical phenomena," and is perhaps the explanation of his seemingly uncritical acceptance of the more extreme instances.

WILLIAM McDougall.

**The Group Mind : A Sketch of the Principles of Social Psychology, with Some Attempt to Apply Them to the Interpretation of National Life and Character.** By WILLIAM McDougall, F.R.S. (Cambridge : at the University Press, 21s. net.)

Dr. McDougall is a pioneer in the field of Collective Psychology, and this book constitutes, as was to be expected, a notable contribution to the subject.

The connection of the latter with the special problems of Psychical Research is necessarily somewhat remote, but there are at least two points of contact where the inquiries may be expected to exert a reciprocal influence on each other.

The first of these is Telepathy, which is of the greatest importance to the Psychical Researcher. In this connection Dr. McDougall says :

"A considerable amount of respectable evidence has been brought forward in recent years to prove that one mind may influence another by some obscure mode of action that does not involve the known organs of expression and of perception; and much of this evidence seems to show that one mind may induce in another a state of consciousness similar to its own. If, then, such direct interaction between two minds can take place in an easily appreciable degree in certain instances, it would seem not improbable that a similar direct interaction, producing a lesser, and therefore a less easily appreciable, degree of assimilation of the states of consciousness of the minds concerned, may be constantly and normally at work. If this were the case, such telepathic interaction might well play a very important part in collective mental life, and, where a large number of persons is congregated, it might tend to produce that intensification of emotion which is so characteristic of crowds."

Most experienced students of Psychical Research hold that the evidence for Telepathy is practically conclusive and, in view of the foregoing quotation, it is clear that a general acceptance of this opinion would be of



great importance for Collective Psychology. Conversely, if students of the latter subject were to find that certain phenomena strongly indicated the operation of telepathic factors, this observation would lend important collateral support to the evidence met with in Psychical Research.

Closely allied to this point is the second—namely, the question of whether a group of individuals possesses, or might possess, anything in the nature of a collective consciousness over and above their individual consciousnesses. This possibility Dr. McDougall provisionally rejects, but if Telepathy is a *vera causa* in nature, something of the kind appears to be a necessary consequence of it.

In so far as two minds would be *en rapport* their experiences would be “pooled” so to speak, their processes would react on one another, and their responses to any situation would become more and more similar as the degree of *rapport* increased. If the *rapport* were perfect the resulting state of affairs would be pragmatically indistinguishable from the existence of a true collective consciousness.

This possibility of the “pooling” of experience is one which constantly confronts Psychical Researchers in their efforts to ascertain the origin of evidential matter. It has even been suggested that some kind of a “central post” of experience may exist to which the “unconscious” of an automatist has access and from which evidential items are derived.

This view is not widely held, but its exponents could fairly claim that it has certain affinities with Jung’s conception of a “collective unconscious,” and a similar resemblance would doubtless be established by those psychologists such as Fouillée and Espinas, who are inclined to accept the hypothesis of a collective consciousness.

From this it is clear that Psychical Research and Social Psychology have more in common than might at first be suspected. Each is likely to throw a sidelight on the other, and students of Psychical Research who wish to make the most of this sidelight should certainly read Dr. McDougall’s very valuable book.

W. WHATELY SMITH.

**The Physical Phenomena of Spiritualism.** By HERWARD CARRINGTON, Ph.D. New edition. 1920. Pp. x. + 426. (Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner and Co., Ltd., 12s. 6d. net.)

When the first edition of this book was issued in 1907 it stood almost alone amongst books of its kind. Such volumes as Truesdell’s *Bottom Facts*, *The Revelations of a Spirit Medium*, *The Confessions of a Medium*, etc., were scarcely known amongst the general public, although their contents had long been in the treasured possession of both amateur and professional magicians. The appearance, therefore, of Dr. Carrington’s work caused some small misgiving amongst magicians, for here was the cream of magical deception served up in an attractive form and made available for public consumption. Magicians are notoriously jealous of their secrets, and usually can only be persuaded to part with them when their own sphere of legitimate deception is invaded by the professional mediumistic trickster. But in these days of renewed spiritualistic

activities even they can scarcely fail to welcome the reappearance of a work so broad in scope as that of Dr. Carrington. The author is one of those few investigators who know the scope and limit of deceptive contrivances. His acceptance of certain of the phenomena occurring in the presence of Eusapia Palladino demonstrates his ability to distinguish the genuine from the fraudulent, a faculty so often wanting in many of our more noteworthy sceptics. In the volume before us Dr. Carrington deals fairly fully with the fraudulent aspect of the subject, and also touches upon those phenomena which he considers inexplicable through normal agencies alone. Raps, slate-writing and sealed-letter reading, rope-tying materialisations, all receive the attention that they deserve, although in a few cases a somewhat more detailed treatment would have been acceptable. Such, however, was not Dr. Carrington's intention, and he has been singularly successful in presenting in a popular manner a subject that must always be of a difficult and even technical nature. To all those who desire to be acquainted in broad outline with the methods of fraudulent performers, and to appreciate generally the character of physical mediumship, the book cannot be too highly recommended. Yet it must not be imagined that the treatise is in any way exhaustive. Many of the more brilliant contrivances Dr. Carrington has left unrecorded, and indeed it might be truly said that each chapter could be successfully expanded into a separate volume. To understand fully the fraudulent side of spiritualism one must make oneself master of those great basic principles of deception upon which the art of magic ultimately rests. Dr. Carrington has very wisely omitted to deal in any way fully with the psychological aspect of the subject, contenting himself with a brief historical, critical, and expository survey of the phenomena. As such the book is probably unrivalled and ought to be in the hands of every student of the difficult problems associated with Psychical Research.

E. J. DINGWALL.

**The Foundations of Spiritualism.** By W. WHATELY SMITH. (Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner and Co., Ltd., 3s. 6d. net.)

This book is published at an opportune moment. Recent years have seen a great increase of interest in the possibility of establishing by Psychical Research proof of survival of bodily death, and an increase also of evidence bearing on the subject. The time was therefore ripe for a book summarising the more recent evidence, and critically examining the main lines upon which research is proceeding. Mr. Whately Smith has very adequately supplied this need, which is all the greater for the steady stream of uncritical and unscientific literature tending to obscure the issue.

More than half the book is taken up with a discussion of the different forms of evidence for survival, among which the author, very properly in our opinion, attaches greatest importance to "cross-correspondences," and to what he calls "literary puzzles," such as the well-known "Ear of Dionysius" case. It is not, of course, possible in so small a book to give a full account of even a single case from either of these classes, but Mr.

Whately Smith's summaries are clear and accurate, and full reference is given to other publications in which the cases may be studied at length.

The latter part of the book deals briefly with "the Process of Communication," and closes with a chapter setting out the author's "conclusions."

Many readers will think that Mr. Whately Smith is unduly cautious in characterising the experimental evidence for survival and communication with the deceased as "distinctly good," and refusing to assess the chances of the "spiritistic" hypothesis proving correct at much more than a half. It is true that "it is difficult to set a limit to the potentialities of the incarnate mind." There is no item of knowledge, however surprising, that may not be attributed to the subliminal memory of an automatist. But the cross-correspondences introduce, as the author recognises, a new element, that of purposive direction, the intention of a single mind. Unless and until some single incarnate mind can be indicated as the probable source, the most reasonable view seems to be to attribute the results observed to the particular discarnate mind by whom they purport to be inspired, and within the range of whose knowledge, as it existed before death, they have in some cases been proved to be.

The book is logical and lucid in its arrangement, and deserves to be widely read. In future editions the author will no doubt correct various misprints, such as "precipient" for "percipient" (p. 74), and "phenomena" for "phenomenon" (p. 8).

H. DE G. SALTER.

**Soul Science : The Proof of Life After Death.** By FRANKLIN A. THOMAS. (W. and G. Foyle, Ltd., 12s. 6d.)

The writer tells us that "this is one of the greatest books ever written," and "should be in every home." After that, it is hardly necessary to say that it hails from the States, where the climate seems to engender in the inhabitants a wonderfully "gude conceit o' theirsels." Mr. Thomas tells us to be good, to avoid tobacco, to sit in home circles for the development of clairvoyance, and to believe in an immanent God. As to proof of life after death, he affirms such life, but gives no evidence.

**The Dawn of Hope.** By the hand of EDITH A. LEALE, with Forewords by Rev. G. Vale Owen, Rev. F. J. Paine, and Rev. Arthur Chambers. (Kegan Paul and Co, Ltd., 5s. net.)

Automatic or inspirational writing, from a son killed in 1916. Describes beautiful scenery, lovely children, music, flowers, and so forth, somewhat in the manner of Mr. Vale Owen's script. The messages do not appear to have any evidential quality, and consequently do not call for long discussion in a scientific journal; but no doubt they will be comforting and helpful to many bereaved people, as they were to the recipient.